

XVII S E R M O N S

O N

Several Occasions:

PARTICULARLY

Of the Great Duty of Universal Love and Charity.	Of the Original of Sin and Misery.
Of the Government of Passion.	Of Election and Reprobation, being a Paraphrase on ROM. IX.
Discourses upon Occasion of the PLAGUE.	The PRESENT Life a State of PROBATION in order to a Future Life.
Of St PETER being the Rock on which CHRIST built his Church.	That CHRIST's Admonitions to his Apostles, belong universally to all Christians.
Of the Faith of ABRAHAM.	
Of CHRIST being the Bread of Life.	

By SAMUEL CLARKE, D. D. Rector of
St James's Westminster.

The SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N:

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SERM-



*The Great Duty of Universal LOVE
and CHARITY.*

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd before the

Q U E E N,

A T

St JAMES's CHAPEL,

On Sunday *Decemb.* the 30th, 1705.

Publilh'd by Her MAJESTIES Special Command.

I J O H N IV, 21.

*And this Commandment have we from
him, that he who loveth God, love
his Brother also.*

TH E true End and Design of Serm.I.
Religion, is manifestly this; ~~~~~
to make Men wiser and bet-
ter; to improve, exalt, and
perfect their Nature; to teach them to
B obey,

*S*erm. I. obey, and love, and imitate God; to
cause them to extend their Love and
Goodness and Charity to all their Fellow-Creatures, each in their several Stations, and according to the Measure of their several Abilities; in like manner as the universal Goodness of God, extends it self over all his Works through the whole Creation: And to oblige them to govern the Passions of their Mind, with Moderation; and the Appetites of their Body, with Temperance. This is plainly the chief End and Design of true Religion. And whoever acts contrary to all or any of these great Rules, by wilfully dishonouring God, by hating his Brother, or by abusing and corrupting himself; is either a false and hypocritical Professour of the Truth, if he does these things in Contradiction to the plain Rules, and in Defiance of the Laws of his Religion; or else the Religion which he professes, is itself a false and corrupt Religion, if he does any of these things in Compliance with the Principles, and by Permission of the Laws thereof. The Religion of the Church of *Rome*, is therefore a false and corrupt Religion; because, as it dishonours *God* by mixing Idolatry with Divine Worship, and gives Men too much
Encou-

Encouragement to corrupt *Themselves*, Sermon.I.
and to indulge their vicious Inclinations and Habits, by allowing them, through many Superstitious Rites, to reconcile a wicked Life with the Hopes of Heaven; so it *particularly* permits, nay and requires Men to hate and persecute their *Brethren*. And those whom, for want of the Arguments of Reason and Truth, they are not able to convince and bring over to their Party, they endeavour by all the ways of Violence and Cruelty to root out and extirpate from among Men: As if the Religion of Christ was intended to devert Men of common Humanity, and the Service and Glory of God could in good earnest be promoted by the Destruction of Mankind. This is one of the greatest Corruptions of an excellent Institution, that can be imagined; when Religion itself, instead of promoting the universal Peace and Happiness and Welfare of Men, is made to authorize such Practises, the Prevention whereof is manifestly the chief and greatest End for which Any Religion can reasonably be supposed to have been instituted at all. Particular Persons, under the Profession of the best and purest Religion in the World, may be led away with some Degrees of this Spirit of

B 2

Error;

Serm. I. Errour; through a false Zeal, and a mistaken Judgment; as some of the *Apostles* themselves were for calling for Fire from Heaven upon the *Samaritans* who refused to entertain our Saviour: But the Christian Religion *it self*, the pure and uncorrupted Doctrine of our Saviour, is entirely opposite to this Spirit; and teaches us nothing but Love and Peace, Meekness and Charity, Patience and Forbearance one towards another. *If a Man say, I love God, and hateth his Brother, he is a Liar; For this Commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God, love his Brother also.*

In the following Discourse upon which Words, I shall endeavour, *First*, to show briefly the great Obligation, which lies upon all Men in general, considered as Equals, to practise this excellent Duty of Love and Meekness, Patience and Forbearance one towards another. And, *Secondly*, I shall consider some of the principal and most remarkable Variations of this Duty, arising from the different Relations and Circumstances that Men stand in, one towards another.

I. As to the Obligation which lies upon all Men in general, consider'd as Equals, to practise this great Duty of universal Love, Meekness and Charity; 'tis evident

1st. That, by the Original Order and Constitution of *Nature*, Men are so made and framed, that they necessarily want one another's Help and Assistance, for their mutual Support and Preservation in the World. They cannot subsist, at least they cannot enjoy any Comfort of Life, independently on each other; but are manifestly fitted by the very Frame of their Nature, to live in Communities; and Society is absolutely necessary for them; and the Bond of all Society, is mutual Love, Charity and Friendship. Now in this Respect, all Men naturally stand upon the same Level; they have All the same natural Wants and Desires; they are All in the same Need of each other's Assistance, and are equally capable of enjoying the Benefits and Advantages of Society. 'Tis manifest therefore that every Man, as he is a Man, is bound by the Law of his Nature, by common *Humanity*, to look upon himself as a Part or Member of that one universal Body or Community,

Serm.I.munity, which is made up of all Man-
 ~~~~~ kind; to think himself born and sent in-  
 to the World on purpose, to promote  
 the publick Good and Welfare of all his  
 Fellow-Creatures; and consequently ob-  
 liged, as the necessary and only effectual  
 Means to that End, to embrace them  
 All with universal Love, Charity, and  
 Benevolence.

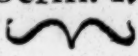
And as all Men are obliged to  
 this, by the necessary *Law and Con-  
 dition* of their Being, and by all the  
 outward *Circumstances* of the present  
 State, wherein God has placed them; so  
 they are also strongly prompted to it by  
 the *natural Inclinations* of their own  
 Minds, when not corrupted by the Pra-  
 ctise of Vice. For by Nature Men are  
 plainly disposed to be kind, and friend-  
 ly, and willing to do good. Nothing  
 is naturally more agreeable and pleasant  
 to the Mind of Man, than being help-  
 ful and beneficial one to another. And,  
 did they not suffer Covetousness and  
 Revenge, and other foolish and absurd  
 Passions, unreasonably to over-rule this  
 their natural Disposition; they would  
 universally enjoy the happy Fruits and  
 Effects of it. For even in the present  
 most corrupt State of the World, as far  
 as their Vices will permit, Men still de-  
 sire

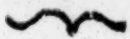
fire to keep up a general Commerce and Serm.I.  
Communication with each other; they  
love to increase their Dependencies, by  
multiplying Affinities; and to enlarge  
their Friendships, by mutual good Offi-  
ces; and to establish Societies, by a  
Communication of Arts and Labour and  
Industry. The only possible Means of  
preserving which Societies in any tole-  
rable and durable Manner, being the  
Practise of mutual Love and universal  
Charity and Benevolence; shows plain-  
ly what the Direction and Tendency of  
uncorrupted Nature is.

No Man therefore can, without  
transgressing both the plain *Law* of his  
Being, and also acting contrary to the  
Reason of his own Mind and the natu-  
ral *Inclination* of his uncorrupted Af-  
fections, do willingly any Hurt or Mis-  
chief to any Man: But every one is ob-  
liged for the publick Benefit, to endea-  
vour to do good to All, and to love all  
Men even as himself. And, upon what  
Occasion soever any Misunderstandings  
or Provocations may happen to arise, he  
ought immediately to endeavour to ap-  
pease with Gentleness, rather than exas-  
perate with Retaliations; and put an  
End to all Differences, as soon as possi-  
bly he can. By this Means the World

Serm.I. would become as happy, as 'tis possible  
 ~~~~~ for Men in this present State of Imperfection to be. And nothing hinders Mankind from arriving actually at this Degree of Happiness, but most *perverse* and most *unreasonable Iniquity*.

For, in order to bring about this great and excellent End, *viz.* universal Love and Friendship, and all the happy Effects and Consequences of it; nothing further is requisite, than that Men do to Others in all Respects, what they would reasonably desire that Others should in like Circumstances do to Them. This is all that is really meant by loving others as themselves; And thus much they are manifestly obliged to, by the plainest *Equity*, and by the clearest *Reason* in the World. Every Man is desirous, and thinks it highly reasonable, that Others should deal with *Him*, according to the Rules of Equity, Humanity, and Friendship; that they should be tender of his Life, Estate, and Reputation; that in Matters of Commerce, they should treat him with Justice, Fairness and Truth; that in Things wherein he stands in Need of their Assistance, and has good Ground to expect it, they should be willing to relieve him according to their
 their

their Power; that in case of Ignorance Serm. I.
or Mistake, they should be ready to inform 
him; and, where he has given any Of-
fense, to forgive him upon his Desire
of Reconciliation. This every Man
thinks reasonable in his *own* Case; And
therefore he is undeniably bound to
think it reasonable likewise, when ever
it be *another Man's* Case to expect the
like from *Him*. And if he does not act
according to this Judgment; he is ma-
nifestly guilty of such Iniquity and Un-
righteousness, as nothing but Custom in
Wickedness and the Number of evil Ex-
amples could be able to support Men un-
der, and harden them in the Practise of
it, against the Shame and Self-condem-
nation of their own Minds. For, what
is in it self fit and right to be done, eve-
ry Man's own Conscience plainly tells
him; And, whensoever he gives himself
Time seriously to consider and review
his Actions, it accordingly either ap-
plauds and commends him, and affords
him great Pleasure and Satisfaction,
from the Sense of his having answered
the chief Ends of his Creation, and
complied with the highest Obligations of
his Nature, in having endeavoured to
promote the universal Welfare and Hap-
piness of Mankind, by the Practise of
Truth

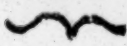
Serm. I. Truth and Righteousness, Meekness,  Goodness and charity; or else, on the other Side, it cannot but secretly reproach and severely condemn him, for having acted the contrary Part. Which Judgment of Conscience, though Men may indeed conceal from the World, and dissemble their Sense of the Weight of it upon their own Minds, in respect of their *own Actions*; yet it always discovers it self in the Censures they pass upon the *Actions of Others*. For, how much Wickedness, and Uncharitableness, or Pride and Contentiousness soever, Men can overlook in *themselves*; yet there is no Man, but in judging of *others*, where his own Interest and Passions are not concerned, will rightly enough distinguish concerning the Characters of Persons, and the true Value of Mens Actions; will give just Applause and Commendation to Men of meek and peaceable and quiet Spirits, Lovers of Mankind, such as delight to do good, and to make All about them as easy and happy as they can; and, on the contrary, will freely condemn the Promoters of Hatred, Animosity, and Contention. All which plainly shows, both what the Law of our Nature, and what the original Inclinations

Universal LOVE and CHARITY.

II

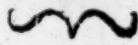
Inclinations of our Affections are, when Serm. I.
not corrupted with the Practise of Vice.

2. As all Men are obliged thus by the necessary *Circumstances and Condition* of their Being, and also by the *original and natural Inclinations* of their own Minds, to love and to do Good to each other, according to their several Powers and Abilities: So they are still further and more strictly obliged to the Practise of the same Duty, in *Imitation* of the *Nature*, and in *Obedience* to the *Will and Law* of God. God himself is ^{1 John iv, 8.} Love, as the Apostle styles him; an infinite and inexhaustible Fountain of never-failing Goodness: Who, being infinitely and eternally happy in the enjoyment of his own unspeakable Perfections, could have no other Motive to create things at first, but only that he might communicate his Goodness and Happiness to his Creatures; and continues to preserve them for no other Reason, but that he may still continue to do good to them. He ^{Matt. v,} *maketh his Sun to rise on the Evil and on the Good,* ^{45.} *and sendeth Rain on the Just and on the Unjust: Giving us from Heaven fruitful Seasons, and filling our Hearts with* ^{Acts xiv, 17.} *Food and Gladness.* Now for the same reason

Serm. I. Truth and Righteousness, Meekness,  Goodness and charity; or else, on the other Side, it cannot but secretly reproach and severely condemn him, for having acted the contrary Part. Which Judgment of Conscience, though Men may indeed conceal from the World, and dissemble their Sense of the Weight of it upon their own Minds, in respect of their *own Actions*; yet it always discovers it self in the Censures they pass upon the *Actions of Others*. For, how much Wickedness, and Uncharitableness, or Pride and Contentiousness soever, Men can overlook in *themselves*; yet there is no Man, but in judging of *others*, where his own Interest and Passions are not concerned, will rightly enough distinguish concerning the Characters of Persons, and the true Value of Mens Actions; will give just Applause and Commendation to Men of meek and peaceable and quiet Spirits, Lovers of Mankind, such as delight to do good, and to make All about them as easy and happy as they can; and, on the contrary, will freely condemn the Promoters of Hatred, Animosity, and Contention. All which plainly shows, both what the Law of our Nature, and what the original Inclinations

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The Great DUTY of

Serm. I. reason that God does *Himself* continually delight in doing Good, and seems always to take especial Pleasure in describing himself by that particular Attribute of Love and Goodness; for the same reason it must necessarily be his Will, that all reasonable Creatures should imitate him in that excellent Perfection; and, by the Practise of mutual Love and Charity, permit and assist each other to enjoy in particular the several Effects and Blessings of the Divine universal Goodness. God cannot but be pleased with Such, who endeavour to conform themselves to the Likeness of his Divine Nature, and make it their Business, according to the Extent of their Power, and the Measure of their several Abilities, to promote the Welfare and Happiness of all their Fellow-creatures; in like manner as the Love and Goodness and Mercy of God extends itself universally over all his Works through the Whole Creation. He has given us noble Powers and Faculties on Purpose, to enable us to imitate him in the Exercise of these excellent Attributes. He has endued us with Reason and Understanding for that very End, that we might be able to discern between Good and Evil, and learn to choose

choose the One and avoid the Other. Serm. I.
 He has implanted in our Minds such Affections and Dispositions, as naturally incline us to be *kind* and *friendly* and *charitable* one towards another. He has so framed and constituted our Nature, and so ordered the Circumstances of our present State, as to make Society and Friendship necessary to the Support and Comfort of Life; on Purpose that Men might be continually exercised in the Practise of these divine Vertues. He has interwoven the Interests of Men, and made the Happiness of every particular Person depend upon the Welfare of the Publick; that each one, from the Sense of his own Wants and Exigencies, might see the Reasonableness and Necessity of making it his principal Business to do good to others. In fine; he has given us no other Way of expressing so acceptably our Love and Gratitude to Himself, whom we *have not seen*; as by Loving and doing good to our Brethren, whom *we have seen*. For *no Man hath seen God at any Time*; But if we love one another, hereby we know that God, tho' invisible, yet really *dwelleth in us*, and that *his Love is perfected in us*, and that *we dwell in him and he in us*, because we are Imitators of his Nature and Partakers

Joh. iv. 21.

1 Joh. iv.
 12 & 13.

Serm. I. *kers of his Spirit.* And thus much is clear
 even from the bare Light of Nature it self.

But then, 3^{dly}, The *Christian* Religion carries our Obligation to the Practise of this Excellent Duty, still much higher. We are *Now* obliged to love and to do good to one another, not only by the Ties of common Humanity, as we are Men, and Partakers of the same common Nature; but we are further to look upon our selves as *Brethren* in a more peculiar and eminent Manner, being All the Children of God in Christ, all Members of the same Body, all Partakers of the same Spirit, all Heirs of the same blessed Hope of Immortality.

Eph. iv, 4. *There is one Body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one Hope of your Calling; One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you*

Eph. iv, 1. *all.* Wherefore I beseech you, saith the Apostle, *that ye walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith ye are called; With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace.*

Again: We Christians, have not only the *Example* of God's Love and Goodness in general proposed to our Imitation,

tion, as these excellent Attributes of the Serm. I.
 Divine Nature are made known to Us by right Reason, and by the Light of Nature, and by our continual Experience of that good Providence, which presides over all, and does good to all, and manifests it self daily in all the Works of God through the whole Creation: But we have moreover the *Example* of God's Goodness and Loving-kindness manifested to us in a more *particular* and extraordinary Manner, in that singular Instance of the Redemption of Mankind by the Death of his Son: Of which exceeding great and undeserved Mercy, we being all Partakers, and having all our Hopes of Happiness founded upon it, are consequently under the strongest Obligation possible, to be in our proportion kind and merciful and charitable to our *Brethren*, as God has been infinitely good and merciful to *Us*. This Argument is strongly urged by the Apostle St Paul, Col. iii, 12. *Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness long-suffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any Man has a Quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And*
 above

Serm. I. *above all these things, put on Charity, which is the bond of perfectness; and let the Peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one Body.*

Lastly; As we are Christians, we are obliged to love and to do good to each other; not only by our knowing *in general*, from the consideration of the Divine Nature and Attributes, that it must needs be agreeable to the Will of God that we should do so; but by having moreover received it, with singular Inforcement, as the *peculiar* Law and Command of our *Saviour*, on which he insists particularly, and seems to recommend it above all others, as the most absolutely necessary and indispensable Qualification of a sincere Christian. *A new Commandment*, saith he, *I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another; Joh. xiii, 34.* And he makes it as it were the distinguishing Mark and Badge of his Disciples: *By this shall all Men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye have love one towards another.* He himself, whilst he was here upon Earth, *went continually about, doing good;* and in so doing he has set us an Example, wherein he indispensably requires that we should follow his Steps.

Steps. And accordingly we find the A- Sermon. I.
 postles every where declaring, that uni-
 versal Love and *Charity, is the End of*
the Commandment, the principal Aim
 and Design of our whole Religion, 1
Tim. i, 5. That he that loveth his Neigh-
bour, hath fulfilled the Law; For that
all the Commandments are briefly compre-
hended in this Saying, Thou shalt love
thy Neighbour as thy self, Rom. xiii, 8.
 And again; that *all the Law is fulfil-*
led in one Word, even in this, Thou shalt
love thy Neighbour as thy self, Gal. v,
 14. Infomuch that whosoever wants
 this excellent Virtue; all his other Preten-
 ses of Religion whatsoever, and of
 Zeal for the Service of God, are decla-
 red to be vain and of no value. *If a*
Man say, I love God, and hateth his
Brother, he is a Lyar, 1 Joh. iv, 20. And
 St Paul in like manner: *Though I speak,*
 saith he, *with the Tongues of Men and*
Angels, and have not Charity; I am
become as sounding Brass, or a tinkling
Cymbal; That is, all my Pretenses to
 Religion are false and empty. *And*
though I have the Gift of Prophecy, and
understand all Mysteries and all Know-
ledge; and though I have all Faith, so
that I could remove Mountains, and
have no Charity; I am nothing. And
 C though

The Great DUTY of

Serm.I. *though I bestow all my Goods to feed the Poor, and though I give my Body to be burned; and have not Charity; it profiteth me nothing; 1 Cor. xiii, 1.*

And the Reason why so particular a Stress is laid upon the Practise of this great Duty of universal Love and Charity, is plain. Namely, because it is That Temper and Disposition of Mind, which is the highest possible Improvement and Perfection of our rational Nature. 'Tis that which makes our Souls like unto God, who is Goodness itself. 'Tis That which, in the Nature of the thing itself, is of the last and utmost Importance, as being naturally and necessarily the Condition and Ground both of our present Happiness and of that which is to come. 'Tis a Qualification of Mind absolutely necessary, to make us capable of the *Sight* of God, and of the *Happiness* of Heaven. For we must be *like* God, if we will *see him as he is*: And we must first attain that Disposition of Mind, wherein the Happiness of Heaven essentially consists; if we will hope to be Partakers of that Happiness. In a Word; That Frame of Mind which inclines us to do good, and to take Delight in doing it, is itself the Temper and Disposition of Happiness; And without this,

'tis

'tis no more possible for a rational Serm.I.
 Creature to be made Happy, than it is to alter the Nature and Essences, the necessary and eternal Reason and Proportion of Things. This is the plain and necessary Reason, why Love and Charity and Goodness, are constantly preferred before all other Virtues; as being the ultimate End and Design of Religion, and themselves a principal and necessary Ingredient of the Joys of Heaven. Almost all *other* Virtues, or Gifts and Excellencies whatsoever, are but as Means to this End; and to be *done away*, *when that which is perfect is come*. *Hope*, is but the present Expectation, and *Faith* the firm Belief, of those Things which shall be made manifest hereafter. And when That comes to pass, then These Virtues, and all other Gifts which are in Order to these, must necessarily and of Course cease. *Whether there be Prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be Tongues, they shall cease; whether there be Knowledge, it shall vanish away*. But *Charity and Goodness, never fail*. These are Dispositions of Mind which are begun in the *Virtues of this* Life, and compleated in the *Glory of the next*; Which will grow up with the Improvements of our

1 Cor. xiii.
8.

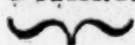
Serm. I. Knowledge and Virtue here, to a perfect and unspeakable Happiness in the Enjoyments of the World to come.

And now, could any Man, who seriously considered these Things, and was unacquainted with the Practise of the World, believe it possible, that Men who professed that holy Religion which so plainly teaches this Doctrine of Peace, should yet, so directly contrary to the whole End and Design of the Religion of Christ, (as is too plainly the Practise of the chief Propagators of the *Romish* Faith,) indulge their Passions, their Pride, their Covetousness, their Ambition so far, as not only to be the Cause of Envyings, Strifes and Contentions, but even to make

Jam. iv, 1. *Wars and Fightings* necessary among Christians? to the infinite Scandal of our most holy Religion, in the sight of *Jews* and *Turks* and *Pagans*; among whom *the Name of God is blasphemed through Us, as it is written; Rom. ii, 24.* Could such a one believe it possible, if it was not too manifest in Experience; that Men who call themselves Christians, should oppress and *bite and devour one another*, and not be afraid of the Apostles threatening, that they should

Gal. v, 15. *be consumed one of another?* And is it not still

Still *much more* absurd, that Religion *it self*, that the Religion of Christ, the Religion of Peace and Love, which was intended to reconcile Men to God and to each other, should it self be made the Occasion of Hatred, Animosities and Contentions; nay, of the greatest Oppressions and most inhumane Cruelties? In a Word, that Pretenses of Religion *it self*, should produce in Men That Spirit, for the preventing whereof All Religion was principally and ultimately intended? I shall conclude this Head with those remarkable Words of the Apostle St James, *Jam. iii, 13. Who is a wise Man, and endued with Knowledge amongst you? Let him shew out of a good conversation his Works with meekness of Wisdom. But if ye have bitter envyings and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the Truth. This Wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish; For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the Wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easie to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits; &c.*



II. It remains that I proceed in the 2^d place to consider briefly some of the principal *Variations* of this great Duty, arising from the different Relations and Circumstances which Men stand in One towards another.

And here the Practise of this Duty is *diversified* as many ways, as there are different Stations, or different Circumstances and Conditions of Men in the World. I shall only mention These following; from which all the rest may easily be deduced.

1st. What this great Duty of Love and Charity obliges us to, in respect of our Behaviour towards *Superiours and Inferiours*.

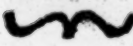
2^{dly}. How it obliges us to behave ourselves towards our *Enemies*, or those who have done us any particular Injury. And

3^{dly}. How it obliges good Men to behave themselves towards Those, who are either *neglecters or despisers of Religion* in general, or so unhappy as to be involved in some particular *great and pernicious Errors*.

1st. In Respect of our Behaviour towards *Superiours*; The Duty of *universal Love* is to shew forth it self in hearty,

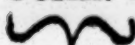
ty, willing and cheerful Obedience to the Commands of those whom God has set over us: In delighting to promote their Honour, and to increase amongst Men That Duty and Respect, which is due to Authority: In thinking Them that *Rule well, worthy of double Honour*: And (because all Government is a Burden, as well as an Honour; therefore) this Duty particularly obliges us to endeavour to make That Burden as light and easy as we can, by a careful and diligent and conscientious Discharge of our several Duties, each in our respective Stations; so as unanimously to promote all the Ends and Designs of good Government, the Execution of wise and wholesome Laws, and the Peace and Prosperity of the Publick.

In respect of our Behaviour towards *Inferiors*; The Duty of Christian *Love*, is to show forth itself in just and righteous and merciful Dealings; in readily relieving the Necessities of those that want; in delivering and vindicating the Oppressed; in instructing the Ignorant and those that are in Errour; in reproofing the Wicked, and, by good Example as well as good Advice, perswading and bringing them to a better Mind: In a word, doing all the Good we can, both to the Souls

Serm.I. and Bodies of Men; in imitation of our
 Saviour, *who went about doing good.*

Now by how much the greater any Man's Power or Riches, Interest or Authority is, and by how much the higher his Station is in the World; by so much the greater is his Power of doing good, and by so much the more glorious is his exercising and imploying his Power to that excellent and noble End. And here is the true and immortal Glory of wise and good Princes, that as they represent God in the Exercise of Power and Authority in the World, so they resemble him also in the application of That Power to serve the Ends of Virtue and Goodness in promoting the publick Happiness of Mankind. Power, is not desirable for its own sake, any more than Wisdom and Knowledge; but only for the sake of that greater Good, which it enables Men to do in the World. And to abuse Power to the enslaving and destroying of Mankind, and to the serving such Purposes, the preventing whereof is indeed the only good Reason for which Power is truly desirable; is the greatest Weakness and Absurdity in the World. To employ great Power and Riches, in conquering and subduing many Nations, in causelessly

lessly oppressing Multitudes of People, Serm. I,
and subverting the common Rights and
Liberties of Men; is the greatest Folly,
as well as the greatest Wickedness,
imaginable: And nothing can be more
weak and contrary to Reason, than to
call That Ambition by the Name of
Glory and Greatness, which is really
the most inglorious and the most
dishonourable thing in Nature. God is
the Supreme Governour of the World,
possessed entirely of absolute and uncon-
troulable Power: Yet he makes use of that
Power to no other End, but to preserve
and support and do good to all his Crea-
tures, according to their several Natures
and Capacities. He *is good*, and *does good*;
and esteems Goodness his greatest Glory
and Perfection, the Title which he most
delights to be described by. True Great-
ness therefore, is to imitate God in this
most glorious Perfection of Goodness. And
those whom he has endued with Power
and Authority to represent him on Earth,
are then most truly and illustriously his
Vice-gerents, when they look upon a
large Extent of Power, to be only a great-
er Compass of doing Good; when they
imitate God, in being Lovers and Preser-
vers of Mankind, and making Govern-
ment a Protection and Security to all
that

Serm. I. that live under it. And if beyond this,  they be still further enabled to restrain the Fury of Oppressors abroad, and to be Vindicators of the common Rights and Liberties of Nations; this is still a higher degree of true Honour and Greatness, and a becoming really the Praise and Glory of the whole Earth. How unspeakably happy is that People, on whom God has vouchsafed to bestow so inestimable a Blessing! And how thankful ought we to be, that the Description of such Felicity, is at This Time the exact Description of our own Case!

2dly. In respect of our Behaviour towards our *Enemies*, or those who have done us any particular Injury; the Duty of universal Love and Charity, is to show forth itself in a willing and ready Disposition to forgive them upon their Repentance and desire of Reconciliation. *If thy Brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him: And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him, Luk. xvii, 3.* This, we Christians are in a particular manner obliged to, by the Example of God's much greater Goodness and Compassion towards
wards

wards *Us*. Since God has forgiven us All, *Serm. I.*
 our *ten thousand Talents*; nothing can
 be more reasonable in the nature of the thing itself, than that We should be moved
 by that Example, to forgive one another
freely our hundred Pence; and to have
 compassion each on *our fellow-servants*,
 as God has had pity on *Us*. But besides
 the reasonableness of the thing itself,
 God has moreover made it the express
 Condition of our own enjoying the be-
 nefit of *His* gracious Pardon: For, *so*
likewise, saith our Saviour, *shall my*
heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye
from your hearts forgive not every one
his Brother their Trespases, Matt. xviii,
 35. And accordingly we are directed
 even in our daily Prayer, to ask Forgive-
 ness at the Hands of God; only upon
 such Condition, and in such Manner, as
 We forgive one another Our Trespases.
 And This, is upon Supposition of our
 Enemies repenting: But if they do *not*
 repent, yet even still we are obliged to
love and bless them, to *pray* for them,
 and take all Opportunities of *doing good*
 to them; after the Example of our hea-
 venly Father, who doth good even to the
 Evil and to the Unthankful. Neverthe-
 less, all that is said upon this Head, is to
 be

Matt.
xviii, 24.

Serm. I. be understood of *private*, not of *the*
 ~~~~~ *publick* Enemies; Against whom neither  
 the Laws of Nature nor of Christianity,  
 have provided any other way of securing  
 our selves, than by endeavouring to de-  
 prive them of the *Power* of hurting *Us*.

*Lastly*, in respect of the behaviour of  
 Good Men towards those who are either  
 neglecters and despisers of Religion in  
 general, or so unhappy as to be involved  
 in some particular great and pernicious  
 Errors; The Duty of universal Love  
 and Charity, obliges us to endeavour by  
 all the ways of Gentleness, Instruction  
 and Reproof, to bring them to Repen-  
 tance and a better Mind. Magistrates  
 indeed, and those who are placed in Au-  
 thority, may and ought to make use of  
 Punishment and Severity, towards those  
 who are guilty of such Crimes, as are  
 destructive of humane Society; And the  
 strict Execution of Good Laws, is in That  
 Case an instance of the greatest Love and  
 Charity to the Publick. But otherwise,  
 'tis the Duty of *a Servant of the Lord*,  
 not to strive, but to be gentle unto all  
 Men, apt to teach, patient; In meekness  
 instructing those that oppose themselves,  
 if God peradventure will give them Re-  
 pentance to the acknowledging of the  
 Truth,

2 Tim. ii,  
 24-

*Truth.* For, *the Wrath of Man, worketh not the Righteousness of God:* And our Saviour himself severely condemns Serm. I.  
Jam. i, 20.

That Spirit, which some of his Disciples discovered, when they desired to call for Fire from Heaven, upon the *Samaritans* who refused to give him reception. Such persons as are not yet come to have a right Sense of Religion *in general*, 'tis our Duty to perswade by Reason and Arguments; to convince them of the Being, Attributes and Providence of God; of the necessity and infinite importance of Religion; of the unalterable difference of Good and Evil; of the reasonableness excellency, and positive Evidence of the Christian Revelation. And those who are so unhappy as to be involved in any *particular* pernicious Errors, 'tis our Duty to inform, instruct, reprove, and by all Christian means endeavour to bring them back to the acknowledgment of the Truth: Taking care above all things, to show them by our good Examples, and by the influence of the Truth upon our own Lives; that we have no other design in endeavouring to convince Them, but theirs and our own Salvation. In promoting which Ends, we shall do well to have always imprinted on our Minds  
those

Serm. I. those excellent Words, wherewith St  
James concludes his Epistle: *Brethren,*  
*if any of you do err from the truth, and*  
*one convert him; let him know, that he*  
*which converteth the Sinner from the*  
*errour of his way, shall save a Soul from*  
*death, and shall hide a multitude of*  
*Sins.*





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A  
S E R M O N

Preach'd at the FUNERAL of  
*MARY* Lady *COOKE*,

Late WIFE of

Sir *John Cooke*, of *Doctor's-Com-*  
*mons*, *London*, Knight, Do-  
ctor of *L A W S*, &c.

On Tuesday, *October* 11. 1709.

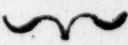
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2 C O R. V. 8.

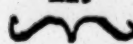
*We are confident, I say, and willing  
rather to be absent from the Body,  
and to be present with the Lord.*

**T**HE Apostle in the foregoing Chapter declares at large how the Assurance of a Resurrection from the Dead, not only enabled him to perform cheerfully all the Duties of a Christian Life, but supported him also, so as not to faint under the severest Persecutions, which continually threatned him even with Death

Serm.  
II.



Serm. Death it self. Therefore as we have re-

II.  received Mercy, saith he, we faint not, ver. 1. We are troubled on every side, yet not distress'd; we are perplex'd, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed ver. 8, 9. The Ground of which Comfort and Support, he expresses, v. 10. Always bearing about in the Body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the Life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal Flesh; for we which live, are always delivered unto Death for Jesus sake, that the Life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal Flesh. And more clearly, v. 13, 14. Having the same Spirit of Faith-----, and knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up Us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. After which, he returns to the Inference he began with in the first Verse; v. 16. For which Cause we faint not, but tho' our outward Man perish, yet the inward Man is renewed day by day; For our light Affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory; while we look not at the Things which are seen, but at the Things which are not seen; For the Things which are seen, are Temporal;

*Funeral of MARY Lady COOKE.*

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*ral; but the Things which are not seen, are Eternal.* Sermon II.

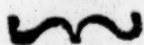
From this general Consideration of the Certainty of a *future* Life, as a ground of Support and Comfort under the Troubles of the *present*; he proceeds in the beginning of the fifth Chapter, to consider the particular Nature of *that Body* we shall be clothed withal at the Resurrection; and of that intermediate State, the Soul will find it self in, between Death and Judgment. As to the Nature of our future *Body*, he tells us, *v. 1.* that whereas our present Body is an *earthly House*, a Building fram'd out of the most perishable Materials, and of a Texture most frail and brittle; a *Tabernacle* tending perpetually in its own Nature by a gradual decay towards a *Dissolution*, and, during that short Period which it is capable of continuing, being every moment liable to be destroy'd by sudden Violence, by the Power of Men, and by the Assaults of acute Diseases: the Body we shall have hereafter, shall on the contrary be *a Building of God, an House not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens*; a Body, fram'd immediately by God himself, made capable of enduring for ever, and fitted to the Circumstances and Injoyments of that Place,

D

which



Serm. which God has provided for it in the Heavens.  
II.

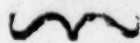


The frequent Meditation upon which happy State, causes good Men to *grone earnestly*, v. 2. *desiring to be clothed upon with our House which is from Heaven; if so be that being clothed, we shall not be found naked.* For we that are in this Tabernacle do *grone*, being *burdened*; not for that we would be *unclothed*, but *clothed upon*, that Mortality might be *swallowed up of Life*. This Passage some understand to refer to what the same Apostle informs us of, in the 15th Chapter of his foregoing Epistle, concerning those who shall be found alive at our Lord's second Coming; that they shall not *die*, but be *changed*; not be *uncloth'd* of this mortal Body, but *cloth'd upon* with their heavenly Habitation; And that the Apostle here expresses a desire of escaping Death, and of being found among those, who, without becoming *naked*, without being *separated* from the Body at all, shall *in a moment, in the twinkling of an Eye*, be *changed*, or *clothed upon* with an immortal and incorruptable Body. But there is no need of interpreting the Words to this Sense. For when the Apostle affirms that we are desirous, not to be *unclothed*, but

but to be *clothed upon*; not to be found *naked*, but to be *clothed upon with our House which is from Heaven*; he does indeed prefer our *State after the Resurrection*, to the *State of Separation*; and represents good Men wishing to be deliver'd from the Burden of the Flesh, not merely for the sake of being separate from the Body, but chiefly and principally in hopes of being clothed with a better and more glorious one. But yet it does not therefore follow, that he meant to extend this Desire so far as to the escaping of Death wholly, and the avoiding to enter into the separate State at all; or that he thought this peculiar Circumstance of those who shall be found alive at the Lord's second Coming, could possibly be the Case of those who lived so early as in his own Time. Nay rather the contrary seems clearly to follow from the 6th Verse, and from the Words of the Text; where he speaks of *being absent from the Body*, as of a thing that would certainly happen to them, and which was truly desirable to good Men; and the Expectation whereof was a Ground of *Confidence* and Support under the Troubles of Life, and against the Fears of Death: Because though the State after

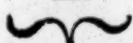
Serm.

II.



Serm. the Resurrection, when we shall be

II.



clothed with incorruptible and immortal Bodies like unto our Saviour's glorious Body, shall be much more happy and desirable, than the State of Separation; yet That State of Separation it self, that imperfect and incomplete State, is far superiour to our Condition in this World, and more eligible than the Burden of the present Flesh. *Therefore we are always confident, says he, knowing that whilst we are at home in the Body, we are absent from the Lord; (for we walk by Faith, not by Sight;) we are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the Body, and to be present with the Lord.*

The Words are not well rendred, *whilst we are at home in the Body.* For this Body is not our proper *Home*; we are only *Strangers* and *Pilgrims* in the present World; and our Life is by St *Peter* justly call'd, *The Time of our sojourning here.* But, whilst *we dwell in* the Body, (so the Words ought rather to be rendred,) or (as the same Word is translated in the following Verse,) *whilst we are present in* the Body; whilst we continue in this World; we are *absent* from the Fountain of Life and Happiness: We are at a Distance from



from the heavenly *Jerusalem*, which is our proper Country; *we are absent from the Lord*; and *live by Faith* only, *not by Sight*. But, God having *given unto us the earnest* of his Holy Spirit, *we are confident* and have full Assurance of the Truth of these Things: We wean our selves therefore from the sensual Injoyments of the present World; We support and comfort our selves with these Meditations, under the Troubles of Life, and against the Fears of Death; We are *willing rather to be absent from the Body*, (whensoever it shall please God to release us;) *and to be present with the Lord*, which is far better.

In the Words, and in the Context, we may observe the following Particulars plainly implied.

1<sup>st</sup>, That we must all shortly be *absent* or separate from this Body.

2<sup>dly</sup>, That this State of Separation, is not a State of absolute Insensibility.

3<sup>dly</sup>, That, to good Men, it is a State of great Happiness, a being *present with the Lord*.

4<sup>thly</sup>, That the Consideration of that intermediate Happiness, is a great Comfort and Support against the Fear of

Serm. Death. *We are confident, and willing*  
 II. *rather to be absent from the Body.*

~ *sthly and Lastly, That this interme-*  
*diate State, tho' it may be a State of Hap-*  
*piness, yet is by no means equal to that*  
*Happiness which good Men shall be pos-*  
*sess'd of after the Resurrection. For*  
*we that are in this Tabernacle do groane,*  
*being burdened; not for that we would*  
*be unclothed, but clothed upon, that*  
*Mortality might be swallowed up of*  
*Life.*

1st, 'Tis supposed in the Words, that  
 we must all shortly be *absent* or sepa-  
 rate from this Body. 'Tis evident there  
 is no need to *prove*, and one would  
 think there should be no need to *re-*  
*mind* Men, that they must all die;  
 when they have every Day such mournful  
 Occasions as these, to excite their Con-  
 sideration. Yet so it is, that even *this*  
*very Thing*, the *Frequency* of other  
 Examples, and the indisputable *Certain-*  
*ty* of their own Mortality, makes them  
 stand in need of the more earnest Ex-  
 hortations, to persuade them not to  
 forget or neglect it. For, as the strong-  
 est Objects that make perpetually an e-  
 qual and continued Impression. upon  
 our Senses, are apt, by reason of their  
 constant Presence, to affect us little more,  
 than

than if they made no Impression upon the Sense at all; And as those great *Phænomena* of Nature, which we observe to return in the constant Course of every Day, excite in us less Admiration; tho' in themselves the most wonderful of all the Works of God, than things much less remarkable, which appear but seldom: So the absolute Certainty of our own Mortality, which leaves no Room for Inquiry or Debate, makes Men almost as much lay aside the Thoughts of it, as if the Certainty were on the other side of the Question; And the Frequency of Instances which ought perpetually to remind us what we must speedily expect, does by a strange Carelessness and habitual Neglect, reconcile Men in such Manner to the Sight of Mortality in others, as if they themselves were not concern'd in the Example. They shake off the Thought of it, as if there could be no Benefit in meditating upon what cannot be prevented; and they look upon it as importune and troublesome to remind them of that, which 'tis not possible but they must already know. Yet That Knowledge, without Meditation, is like unto Ignorance; because it has no Effect, and makes no Impression. 'Tis like



Serm. the speculative Knowledge of a Truth,  
 II. which concerns us not; or like the habitual Understanding of a Demonstration, never recollected. The Reason of this great Stupidity, seems to be the Uncertainty of the *Time* of every Man's Death; which makes Men look upon Life, as a long indefinite Period; and, because the *Time* of their Death is *uncertain*, 'tis to them as an *Uncertainty* in the *Thing it self*. To prevent this Folly therefore, the Scripture is perpetually reminding us, and putting us upon considering, that *our Days on Earth are as a Shadow, and there is no abiding*, 1 Chron. xxix, 15; That *they are swifter than a Weaver's Shuttle*, Job vii, 6; that *they are swifter than a Post*; that *they flee away as the swift Ships, as the Eagle that hasteth to the Prey*, Job ix, 26; that they are as *A sleep, as a Watch in the Night, as a Tale that is told*, Ps. xc; 5, 4, 9; That *our Life is a Vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away*, Jam. iv, 14; that *Man cometh forth like a Flower, and is cut down; he fleeth also as a Shadow, and continueth not*, Job xiv, 2. In the *Morning it flourisheth and groweth up, in the Evening it is cut down and withereth*, Ps. xc, 6. All which Similitudes are elegantly

Funeral of MARY Lady COOKE.

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gantly summ'd up together by the Author of the Book of *Wisdom*: *Wisd.* v, 9. Serm. II.

*All these things are passed away like a Shadow, and as a Post that hasted by; and as a Ship that passeth over the Waves of the Water, which when it is gone by, the Trace thereof cannot be found, neither the Path-way of the Keel in the Waves; Or as when a Bird has flown thro' the Air, there is no Token of her Way to be found-----; Or like as when an Arrow is shot at a Mark, it parteth the Air, which immediately cometh together again, so that a Man cannot know where it went thro'; Even so We in like manner, as soon as we were born, began to draw to our End, and have no sign of Virtue to shew.* These Descriptions of the Vanity and Transitoriness of human Life, are too evidently true, to stand in need of any Proof. Yet the Riches, and Honours, the Pleasures and Allurements of the World, hinder Men too usually from considering them; And men act, as if they were to live here for ever. Providence therefore is very kind to us, in sending Afflictions upon us to awaken us out of this Lethargy; And we should be very Wise and Just to our selves, if we would suffer our selves to be brought  
to

Serm. to serious Consideration by the Troubles

II. and Afflictions of Others. When we

see others taken out of the World before us, we know their Case must in a short Time of Necessity be our own; and the Concern we always see dying Persons under, should make us endeavour without Delay in the Time of our Health and Strength, to lay the Foundation of a good Conscience against the Day of Tryal. We are sure Eternity can never be very far distant from any of us; and we are always uncertain, but it may possibly be very near. And when Death approaches, Sicknes and Pain are alone a Burden sufficient; and it will require all the Helps of Reason and Religion, all the Strength of the *Spirit of a Man*, to *sustain* at that Time the *Infirmities* of Nature. But if the *Spirit* it self be wounded; if the Conscience be distracted with too just Fears; if the great Work of Religion be then *undone*, and yet impossible to be *done*; if the *Spirit* of the Man, which should *support* him under his Infirmary, does it self much more stand in need of *Comfort and Support*; *who can bear it?* This is the Time when all false Colours vanish, and the great Difference and Distinction of Men begins truly to appear. Now the Profane, the Covetous,

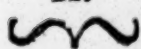


Covetous, the Voluptuous, the Mocker and Scoffer at Religion, begins to judge by other Measures; and *if God should require some great Thing* of him, *would he not do it?* On the contrary, the sober and pious, the righteous and just Person, reflects then with unspeakable Comfort upon his past Life; when he remembers that he has either liv'd always innocent from great Crimes; or at least that the Sins of his Youth have not been so great, as the Repentance and Obedience of his wiser Age. And when the Vail is removed by Death, which transmits these different Persons to that State, where they are to wait for the final Sentence of the unerring Judgment of God; they themselves will judge still more and more clearly concerning the true Nature of Things, and of their own Deserts. For Death is not a total Extinction of the Man, but a Separation only of the Soul from the Body for a Time. Which was the next particular I proposed to discourse of. And here, for Brevity sake, I shall put the

*Second and Third* Particulars into One: *viz.* that the state of Separation, is not a state of absolute Insensibility, but, to good Men, a state of great Happiness, a being *present with the Lord.* All the  
Natural

Serm.

II.



*Natural Arguments, (for the Moral Arguments indeed prove only a future State in general, by the Resurrection of the Body, or otherwise;) All the Natural Arguments, I say, which prove to us by Reason the Spirituality and Immortality of the Soul, seem to prove no less strongly, that the separate State is not a state of Sleep or Insensibility. For if it is a good Argument to conclude with Cicero; When I consider, says \* he, with what swiftness of Thought the Soul is endued, with what a wonderful Memory of Things past, and forecast of Things to come; how many Arts, how many Sciences, how many wonderful Inventions it has found out; I am persuaded that That Nature, which is Possessor of such Faculties, cannot be Mortal: If this, I say, be a good Argument, (and a very excellent one it is;) it seems no less just to infer with Cyrus in Xenophon: I cannot imagine, saith † he,*

\* Quid multa? Sic mihi persuasi, sic sentio; quum tanta celeritas animorum sit, tanta memoria præteritorum, futurorum providentia, tot artes, tantæ scientiæ, tot inventa; non posse eam naturam, quæ res eas contineat, esse mortalem. *Cic. de senectute.*

† "Ουτοι εγωγε, ο παϊ, ουδε τουτο παποει επιοδω, ως η ψυχη, εως αν εν θνητω σωματι η, ζη. οταν η ταυτε απαλλαγη, τσθνηκεν"--- "Ουδε γε οπως αφραν εσαι η ψυχη επιοδαν τσ αφρον σωματι διχα γινεται, ουδε τουτο πεπεισμαι. Αλλ' οταν ακραλι η καθαρος ο νους εκκρινη, τότε ε φρονιμωτατος εις αυτον εσαι. *Cyrus apud Xen.*

that

that the Soul, while it is in this mortal Body, lives; and that, when it is separated from it, then it should die: I cannot persuade my self, that the Soul, by being separated from this Body which is devoid of Sense, should thereupon become it self likewise devoid of Sense: On the contrary it seems to me more reasonable to believe, that when the Mind is separated from the Body, then it should become most of all sensible and intelligent. But these were only the reasonable Conjectures of wise and considering Men. The Scripture assures us with more Certainty and Authority, that *blessed are the Dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their Labours, and their Works do follow them*, Rev. xiv, 13. Which Rest, that it is not the mere Rest of utter Insensibility, may be gathered from *ch. vi, v. 9*; where 'tis said, *I saw under the Altar the Souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the Testimony which they held; and they cried with a loud Voice, &c.* The same thing is intimated to us by our Saviour, in the Parable of the rich Man and *Lazarus*; where the Soul of *Lazarus* is represented as carry'd by Angels into *Abraham's Bosom*,  
and

Serm.  
II.



Serm. and that he was *comforted* in that Place;  
 II. *Luke* xvi; 22, 25. And more clearly  
 yet, in his Promise to the Penitent Thief,  
*Luke* xxiii, 43; *Verily I say unto thee, to day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.*  
*To Day*, that is, immediately, in the  
 state of Separation, before the Resur-  
 rection of Christ, and his Ascension in-  
 to his Kingdom. St. *Paul* had such a  
 Notion of the Happiness of That State,  
 that tho' his *abiding in the Flesh* he knew  
 was better for the Church, yet he was  
*in a strait betwixt two, having a desire*  
*to depart and to be with Christ, which*  
*was far better for himself,* Phil. i; 23,  
 24. And in the Text he declares; *There-*  
*fore we are always confident, knowing*  
*that whilst we are at home in the Body,*  
*we are absent from the Lord; for we*  
*walk by Faith, not by Sight: We are*  
*confident, I say, and willing rather to*  
*be absent from the Body, and to be pre-*  
*sent with the Lord.* The present Life he  
 calls, *walking only by Faith*; the State  
 after Death, *walking by Sight, or being*  
*present with the Lord.* And accord-  
 ingly all the best Writers in the Primi-  
 tive Times, when they have occasion  
 to mention the State of good Men  
 departed, always speak of them as be-  
 ing

ing \* in the Place appointed for them with the Lord; as † beholding our Saviour in Paradise, after such a manner as they are worthy to behold him; as being in a Place of Rest, Refreshment, Comfort, and Expectation of the Completion of their Happiness at the Resurrection.

Serm.

II.

Directly contrary to the Innovations of the Church of Rome, who, without any Appearance of Reason, and without any Colour of Authority from Scripture, teach that the Souls of good Men are tormented in a Purgatory of imaginary Fire, very little differing from that of Hell it self. How much better does even a Jewish Writer express himself upon this Subject! *Wisd. iii, 1. The Souls of the Righteous are in the Hand of God, and there shall no Torment touch them. In the Sight of the Unwise they seemed to die, and their Departure is taken for Misery; and their going from us, to be utter Destruction; but they are in Peace. For tho' they be punish'd in the Sight of Men, yet is their Hope full of Immortality.*

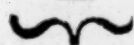
4thly, The Consideration of the Soul's intermediate Happiness in the se-

\* Εἰς τὸ ὀφειλόμενον αὐτοῖς τόπον εἰσὶ εἰς τὴν καρδίαν.  
Polycarpi Epist.

† Πανταχοῦ ᾧ ὁ Σωτὴρ ὁραθήσεται, καθὼς ἄξιοι ἔσονται οἱ ὄντες. Irenæus, lib. 5.

Serm. parate State, is a great Comfort and Sup-

II.



port against the Fear of Death: *Therefore we are confident*, says the Apostle, *and willing rather to be absent from the Body, and to be present with the Lord.* 'Tis some degree of Comfort against the Fear of Death, to consider that it is the Necessity of Nature, and the Appointment of God to all Men; *Heb. ix, 27, It is appointed unto Men once to die.* 'Tis some further degree of Support, to consider that Death is as it were the Haven of Rest, from the Storms and Troubles, the Calamities and Sorrows of the World: *Job iii, 17, There the Wicked cease from troubling, and there the Weary be at Rest; there the Prisoners rest together, they hear not the Voice of the Oppressor: The Small and Great are there, and the Servant is free from his Master.* But after all the Arguments of Comfort that *can* be drawn from Reason and Philosophy, Death is still the *King of Terrors* to Nature, and is become *much more so thro' Sin.* But Christ has now, to all such as repent and truly amend, taken away that *Sting*, and removed the *Fear*; having *destroyed him that had the Power of Death, that is, the Devil; and delivered Them, who thro' Fear of Death were all their Life-time subject to Bond-*

*age.*



age, Heb, ii, 15. *Death* is now abolish- Sermon.  
ed, to all good Men, 2 *Tim.* i, 10; II.  
and become nothing else but a *Passage* ~~~~~  
to a glorious Immortality. And 'tis a  
great Addition of Comfort and Support,  
to consider that even *That Passage* it self  
is not a *Dark Passage* thro' a state of  
utter *Insensibility* ; but a being *present*  
*with the Lord* in some degree of Com-  
munication, and Fore-taste of a more  
perfect Happiness.

The pious Lady, whose Death we now  
lament, took particular Satisfaction in me-  
ditating frequently upon this Subject ; and  
in inquiring into the full Extent and Sig-  
nification of those Texts, which relate to  
it. She made the Holy Scriptures her  
daily Study and Delight, and was much  
conversant in many other excellent  
Books of Piety and Devotion : And the  
Comfort such Studies administer against  
the Fear of Death, is then truly effectual,  
when 'tis applied by such Persons, as  
are prepar'd to receive it by the pre-  
ceding Course of a Holy Life. For the  
space of two Years, wherein Providence  
allotted me to perform the Duties of my  
Ministry in the Parish wherein she dwelt,  
(and wherein I receiv'd singular Favours,  
particularly from that eminent So-  
ciety for the Profession and Practise of

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Serm. the Civil-Law, which ought always

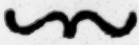
II. gratefully to be acknowledged;) I was  
 my self a Witness of her constant and  
 never-failing Attendance upon the publick Service of God, and the Administration of the Sacrament, with the most exemplary Zeal and Devotion: And, in all the Opportunities I had of observing it, her private Conversation appear'd perfectly agreeable to her religious Behaviour in publick. Which, in a Person in the Strength and Vigour of her Age, very little exceeding 30 Years at the time of her Death, is *an Example* that may be recommended with Justice and Usefulness. But to enlarge too far upon Characters even of such truly pious persons, is neither giving any real Advantage to the Memory of the Dead, nor of so much Benefit to the Living, as the exhorting them upon these Occasions to prepare themselves for Death, which they are all hastening to, by setting before their Eyes continually the most perfect Example of Christ, and the Precepts of the Gospel; in following of which, all good and holy Men and Women who have gone before us, have obtain'd a good Report.

*stbly* and *Lastly*, The intermediate State of Separation, though it may be a State of great Happiness, yet is by no means

means equal to That Happiness, which Serm.  
good Men shall be possess'd of after the II.

*Resurrection: For we that are in this  
Tabernacle do groane, being burden'd;  
not for that we would be uncloth'd, but  
cloth'd upon, that Mortality might be  
swallow'd up of Life. St Paul, tho'  
he knew, that when he was absent from  
the Body, he should be present with the  
Lord, in a State of Rest and Security  
and perfect Assurance, in a State of great  
Happiness and Joy unspeakable; yet tells  
us, that the Crown of Righteousness  
was laid up for him, not to be given  
him by the Righteous Judge before That  
great Day. And our Saviour himself  
bids the Charitable Person expect his final  
Recompence, at the Resurrection of the  
Just. And in the place before-cited,  
the Souls of the Martyrs themselves,  
which St John saw in his Vision  
under the Altar, are represented as in a  
State of Expectation only; How long,  
O Lord, Holy and True, &c. Rev.  
ix, 7. And it was said unto them,  
that they should rest yet for a little Sea-  
son, until their Fellow-Servants also,  
and their Brethren that should be killed  
as They were, should be fulfilled. In a  
word; The Souls of the Righteous are  
doubtless as happy, as they can be in*



Serm. that imperfect State of Separation from  
 II. their Bodies: But 'tis after the Resur-  
 rection only, that their Happiness shall  
 be complete, and that they shall *shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father*: When our Lord shall have *changed this vile Body, that it may be fashion'd like unto his glorious Body; according to the working, whereby he is able even to subdue all Things unto himself*: That is, when *This Body*, which has now in it such manifest Principles of Mortality and Corruption; which consists now of such brittle and tender Parts, that every the least Violence disturbs and unfits them for their Operations; when *This Body*, which is now so weak and feeble, so dull, heavy and unactive, that it clogs the Soul, and retards and hinders its spiritual Operations; when *This Body*, which is now subject to so many Casualties, and has its Continuance depending upon the fit Disposition of so many little and easily disorder'd Parts, that 'tis a greater wonder how we continue to live a Day, than why we die after so few Years Space; *shall* be perfectly refin'd and purged from all the Seeds of Mortality and Corruption; *shall* spring up into an incorruptible and immortal Substance,  
 which

*Funeral of MARY Lady COOKE.*

53

which shall be fitted to endure as long as the Soul to which it is to be united, even to all Eternity; *shall* become so Strong and Powerful, so Active and Vigorous, as even to be assisting to the most spiritual Motions of the Soul, to become every way a fit Organ and Instrument of its most exalted Operations; and *shall* continue in this perfect Health, Strength and Vigour for ever. *For God shall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes, and there shall be no more Death, neither Sorrow nor Crying, neither shall there be any more Pain; for the former Things are passed away.*

Serm.  
II.

To which happy State, that we may all arrive, God of his infinite Mercy grant, &c.



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A  
S E R M O N

Preach'd before the *Honourable House of Commons*, at the Church of St *Margaret Westminster*: On *Tuesday, Nov. 22, 1709*. Being the Day of Thanksgiving for the Signal and Glorious Victory obtained near *Mons*, and for the other Great Successes of Her Majesties Arms, this last Year, under the Command of the Duke of *Malborough*.

P S A L M L, 23.

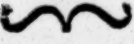
*Who so offereth Praise, glorifies me; and to him that ordereth his Conversation aright, will I shew the Salvation of God.*

Serm.  
III.

~ ~ ~ **T**HERE is no Nation under Heaven, since the Times of God's governing the *Jews* by an immediate Theocracy, that has seen more



more and clearer instances of the interposition of Providence on their behalf, or has had greater Blessings and Means of publick Prosperity put into their Hands; than we of this Nation have had. *As the Hills stand about Jerusalem,* said the Psalmist, (Psalm. cxxv. 2.) *even so standeth the Lord round about his People:* As the Seas encompass our Land, may We no less justly say, even so does the Protection of Providence surround Us on all Sides. We have enjoyed a long and uninterrupted Succession of the Blessings of Heaven from above, and of the Earth beneath; of fruitful Seasons, and a large and plentiful Increase. We have lived under a secure Establishment of all our private Rights and just Liberties, in a wise and well-constituted Government, and in the regular Execution of good and wholesome Laws. We have had the free Exercise of our Religion continued almost to Us alone, when so many of those about us have been deprived of that inestimable Liberty. We have had Deliverances little less than miraculous, frequently vouchsafed us; and have seen many visible interpositions of Providence, in causing such Concurrences of Circumstances

Serm. for our Advantage, as no humane Wisdom could either foresee, direct, or  
 over-rule.

Deut.  
xxxii, 15.

When, after a long Establishment of our Peace and Prosperity, we, like *Jeshurun*, *waxed fat and kicked*; When our Prosperity made us wanton, and we forgot God who *poured* these *Benefits upon us*; When Corruption of Manners prevailed over the Purity of our Religion, and we grew cool in our Zeal for the Service of God, and for the Honour of his Laws; Then did it please God to *threaten* us with the Rod of arbitrary Power, and with the Fears of Popish Slavery; to awaken us out of our careless neglect of Religion, and to compose our little Differences and unchristian Animosities among ourselves. Yet did he *threaten* us only with these Judgments, and *show* us the Terrour of them as it were at a distance, but did not suffer them to prevail over us; removing them from us by an unparalleled Deliverance, almost as soon as they approached, and that we began to feel the smart of them. And from the Time of that wonderful Deliverance, even unto this Day, has God continued to bless us with *Success Abroad* under victorious Armies, and with *Peace and Plenty at Home*,

*Home*, under pious and religious Princes. Sermon.

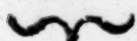
A great and almost perpetual Series of III.

Successes has attended *our Arms*, through the various Events and Hazards of a long, bloody, and expensive War; against the deep Counsels, and formidable Strength, of a cunning, potent, and formerly long-successful Enemy. And at the same time, *we our selves* sit every Man *under his Vine, and under his Fig-tree*, in the secure and peaceable enjoymment of whatever each one has a Right to possess. We enjoy almost all the Happiness and Blessings of *Peace*, even in the midst of a vigorous and bloody *War*; while the Sword and Fire consume round about us, and other fruitful Countries are ravaged and destroyed; while *Thousands fall beside us, and Ten Thousands at our Right-hand*, and yet Providence protects us, that it *comes not nigh us*; while Want and Famine spreads Desolation among our Neighbours, and Pestilence at a Distance threatens still severer Judgments of God. We are not liable to be perpetually spoiled, by the Violence of Arbitrary Power; and to be daily bereaved of our nearest and most valuable Rights, at the mere Will and Pleasure of a lawless Oppressor: But under the happy Influences



Serm.

III.



ences of a mild and most auspicious Government, and under the Protection of wise and good Laws, we enjoy as much Liberty as can be desired by Any, who aim not at the Confusions of unlimited Licentiousness. And to complete this Happiness, we are *not only allowed* the free Exercise of the Reformed Religion, (which under some Governments, who call themselves *Christian*, is persecuted even unto Death; and which we all remember the time, when we had great reason to apprehend we should have been deprived of it;) but the *Profession* of it is moreover encouraged by *Law*, and the *Practice* of it recommended not only by the *Command*, but (which is of greater Influence) by the hearty *Example* also, of our pious and most religious Queen; who *in every Work that She begins in the Service of the House of God, and in the Law, and in the Commandments, to seek her God, She does it with all her Heart, and prospers*, 2 Chron. xxxi, 21.

If these be things which are the proper Subjects of Praise and Thanksgiving, and call for the heartiest Expressions of our Gratitude to *Him who redeemeth our Life from Destruction, and crowneth us with Mercy and Loving-kindness*;

ness; undoubtedly there is no Nation under the Sun, that has more reason this Day, than we, to say, *What shall I render unto the Lord for all his Benefits that he has done unto me? I will offer to him the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, and will call upon the Name of the Lord.* And O! that Men would indeed, with their Mouths and from their Hearts, by the Confession of their Lips, and in the Actions of their Lives, *therefore praise the Lord for his Goodness, and declare the Wonders that he doth for the Children of Men! That they would exalt him also in the Congregation of the People, and praise him in the Seat of the Elders! That there were in All of Us such a Heart,* that, by making suitable returns of Praise and Obedience to God, for his *past* and *present* Benefits; we might show our selves worthy of the *Continuance* of his Favour, and secure for the future the same Blessings, to our selves and our Posterity! Could we but prevail with our selves, not to abuse that Plenty wherewith God has blessed us, by Intemperance and Debauchery: Could we in the midst of that Peace, which we enjoy even while War surrounds us, forbear unreasonable Contentions,

and

Serm.

III.

Psal. cxvi,  
12, 17.Psal. cvii,  
8.

ver. 32.

Serm. and lay aside our Unchristian Heats  
 III. and Animosities among our selves:

~ Could we but use that Liberty we most justly value and boast of, so as not to abuse it to Licentiousness and Wantonness: Could we but in any Measure perswade our selves to *practice* the Religion, we are so zealous to *profess*; and banish from a *Christian* and a *reformed* Nation, Infidelity, Profaneness, and Immorality: In a Word, could we but find in our Hearts to *glorifie* God worthily for his great Mercies, and offer him *Praises* suitable to the wonderful Works which he has done for us; that is, *Praises* accompanied with the Works of Righteousness, so as to *honour* him indeed; This would be truly such an *ordering our Conversation aright*, that we might with good Grounds hope to have the Promise in the Text fulfilled upon our selves; and, by the Continuance of the same, and the Addition of more Blessings, might *see* compleated in us *the Salvation of God. Whoso offereth Praise, glorifies me; and to him that ordereth his Conversation aright, will I shew the Salvation of God.*

In the Words we may observe these Four Things.

1. That



1. That God is to *be glorified* or *honoured* in *All* our *Actions*. *He glorifies me.*

Serm.  
III.

2. That, *more particularly*, upon occasion of any *great Mercy*, any *remarkable Blessing*, or *signal interposition of Providence* on our behalf; we ought to show forth his *Glory* by the most *publick Acknowledgments*, by the heartiest *Praises and Thanksgivings* to him. *Whoso offereth Praise, glorifies me.*

3. That He who will *return Thanks* to God *acceptably* for *past Mercies*, so as to *glorifie him* indeed; must for the future *live suitably* to the *Profession* he publicly makes, of his *Sense* of God's *Providence* governing the *World*, and of his *entire dependence* upon it. *To him that ordereth his Conversation aright.*

4. That to Them who thus *order their Conversation aright*, here is a *Promise* added, of still farther *Blessings*. *I will shew them the Salvation of God.*

1. That God is to *be glorified* or *honoured* in *All* our *Actions*. This is implied in those Words, *he glorifies me*. For, the declaring in what *Manner*, or by what *Actions* God is most *glorified*; and who the *Persons* are, that do most truly

Serm. truly *honour* him; is presupposing the

III. Knowledge and Obligation of the  
 ~~~~~ Duty itself, that *God is to be glorified  
 or honoured in All our Actions*: That
 is; *that* we are at all Times, and in all
 Places, to have a constant Regard to
 him, and Dependance upon him; to
 have a perpetual Sense of him upon
 our Minds, and to make continual Ac-
 knowledgments to him upon all proper
 Occasions; *that* he is the Author and
 Preserver of our Life and Being; *that*
 on him we rely, for all the good
 things we hope for; and by his Per-
 mission, by his Grace and Favour, in-
 joy whatever Good we at present pos-
 sess; *that* to him all possible Praise and
 Thanksgiving is due, for the Prosperity
 or Success we at any time meet with,
 either in our private, or in the publick
 Affairs; *that* by Him Kings reign,
 and Princes decree Justice; *that* His
 Blessing it is upon a Nation, when-
 ever pious Princes are established upon
 the Throne, and their Affairs prosper
 under a wise Administration, and Suc-
 cess accompanies their Arms *abroad*,
 and Peace and Plenty crowns their En-
 deavours *at Home*. On the contrary,
that ill Success in any of our Under-
 takings; the blasting and defeating any
 of

of our Designs; the Calamities and Afflictions, of whatever kind they be, that at any time fall upon us, are still the Strokes of the same Hand, the Appointment of the same wise Providence, the Good Pleasure of the same Supreme Governour and Director of all Things; designed for our Correction and Improvement, to withdraw our Affections from Vanity and Trust in the World, and to lead us to Repentance and Amendment. This is, according to the wise Man's Advice, *Acknowledging God in all our Ways*: This is promoting a true Sense of Religion and Piety in the World: This is *honouring and glorifying God*. For, *the Glory of God*, is not any thing accruing to *God himself*; 'tis not any Addition to *his* Greatness or Happiness, or any Accession to the Perfections of *his* Nature. But, as the true Glory of a *Prince*, is the *Obedience* and the *Prosperity* of his *Subjects*; so the true Notion of the *Glory of God*, is nothing else but the advancing and establishing his *Kingdom* among *Men*. And the *Kingdom of God*, saith St Paul, is, *Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost*. 'Tis something *within* our selves, as our Saviour affirms, St Luke xvii, 21.

Serm. xvii, 21. 'Tis the Conformity of the

III. Creature to the Nature and Life of

God, to the Law and Happiness of Heaven, by the Obedience of the Gospel, and by the Reconciliation of their Nature to the eternal and unchangeable Law of Righteousness and Holiness. Promoting the *Glory of God* therefore, is nothing else but advancing the Interest of true Religion, and promoting the Practice of Virtue in the World. For, as Irreligion and Neglect of God, Profaneness or any vitious Practice in those who pretend to believe; do

2 Sam. xii, 14. (as is said in the Case of *David*) give great occasion to the Enemies of God to blaspheme; and they who make

Rom. ii, 23. their boast in the Law, as St Paul expresses it, do, by transgressing the Law, dishonour God; and the Name of God is through them blasphemed among Unbelievers: So, on the contrary, they who, by unfeigned Piety and Regard to God in the whole Course of their Lives, make their Light to shine before Men; do, by letting others

Mat. v. 16. see their good Works, cause Men to glorify their Father which is in Heaven; That is, they bring other Men over to a true Sense of Religion, and perswade them to have a just Value and Esteem

for

for it. This is the true Notion of the *Glo-ry of God*: This is *doing all Things* for his Honour and Glory. And in This Sense 'tis manifest it is our indispensable Duty, to *honour and glorify God in All our Actions*; by keeping up in *our own* Minds a constant Sense of him, of his Power and Greatness, of his Wisdom and Providence in governing the World, and disposing of all Events; and, as much as in us lies, exciting the same Sense of him, and dependence upon him, in the Minds of *Others* likewise.

2. As God is in some Measure to be honoured or glorified, by *all our Actions* in general; so *more particularly*, upon occasion of any *great Mercy or Deliverance*, upon occasion of any *remarkable Blessing or signal Interposition of Providence on our behalf*, we ought to show forth *his Glory* by the most *publick Acknowledgments*, by the highest Expressions of our *Gratitude*, by the heartiest *Praises and Thanksgivings* to him. *Whoso offereth Praise, glorifies me*; Or, as it is in the former Translation, *Whoso offereth me Thanks and Praise, he honour-eth me*. 'Tis All the Return, that weak and dependent Creatures are capable of making, to the supreme Lord and Governor of all Things; And therefore he is

Serm. graciously pleased to accept it, as a sufficient
 III. *Reward for all the Benefits that he has*
 ~~~~~ *done unto us. Our Goodness extendeth*  
*not to Him, Psal. xvi, 2; neither can*  
*Man be profitable to God, as he that is*  
*wise may be profitable unto himself, Job*  
*xxii, 12. But tho' we cannot make him*  
*any Return for his Benefits, yet thankful*  
*to him for them we can be; and most*  
*inexcusable are we, if we neglect to be*  
*so. All that we are able to do, is to*  
*make humble Acknowledgments of the*  
*Mercies we receive from him; and there-*  
*fore we ought to do it in the gratefulest,*  
*and in the most publick and hearty man-*  
*ner we can. Adversity and Afflictions,*  
*such Corrections and Chastisements as*  
*his Fatherly Hand thinks fit at any*  
*time to lay upon us, it becomes us to*  
*bear with patient Submission, and silent*  
*Resignation to his Will; as being just*  
*Reproofs for our Sins, and Calls to Re-*  
*formation and Repentance: But Blessings*  
*and Instances of Mercy, especially publick*  
*and national Blessings, call for Publick Ac-*  
*knowledgments in such Expressions of*  
*Praise and Gratitude, as may declare to the*  
*World our being duly sensible from what*  
*Hand they come. Upon account of the*  
*Works of Creation, all, even inanimate*  
*Creatures, are in Scripture called upon*



to praise the Lord; that is, to contribute Serm.  
 Matter, and afford perpetual Occasion III.  
 by the Meditation of them, to all rational ~  
 Creatures to sing his Praises; *Praise him*  
 (that is, afford continual subject-matter  
 for his Praises,) *O ye Sun and Moon; Pf. cxlviii,*  
*praise him all ye Stars of Light, &c. The* 3.  
 Works of *Providence*, are no less great  
 and conspicuous, than those of Creation;  
 And for These Works, Men, who are chief-  
 ly and most immediately concern'd in them,  
 and who alone are able to discern and judge  
 of them, are in Scripture required perpetu-  
 ally to praise him: To Praise him *perpe-*  
*tually*; because the Number and Variety of  
 them is so great, that no Tongue can wor-  
 thily or sufficiently extol them: *Who can*  
*express the noble Acts of the Lord, or*  
*show forth all his Praise?* Psal. cvi. 2.

'Tis the least that any reasonable Person  
 can do, in return for great Benefits; to  
 make a thankful Acknowledgment of  
 them, to *Him* from whom he receiv'd  
 them. And yet because 'tis *All*, (as I be-  
 fore observ'd) that weak and dependent  
 Creatures *can* pay to *Him* who is abso-  
 lute Lord of all things; therefore, when  
 it proceeds from a sincere Mind and  
 hearty Affection, 'tis accepted by him  
 as the most valuable Sacrifice. *Ver. 9,*  
*of this 50th Psalm; I will take no Bul-*  

F 2
lock,

Serm. lock, saith God, out of thy House, nor  
 III. He-goats out of thy Fold; For all the

Beasts of the Forest are mine, and so are the Cattle upon a Thousand Hills: Will I eat the Flesh of Bulls, or drink the Blood of Goats? No: But offer unto God Thanksgiving, and pay thy Vows unto the most High: And call upon me in the Day of Trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorifie me. Again, Psal. cxvi, 12, 17. What shall I render unto the Lord, for all the Benefits that he has done unto me? I will offer to him the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, and will call upon the Name of the Lord. And Psal. lxxix; 30, 31; I will praise the Name of God with a Song, and will magnify him with Thanksgiving; This also shall please the Lord, better than a Bullock that has Horns and Hoofs. The same Notion is very elegantly expressed by the Prophet Hosea, ch. xiv, ver. 2. *We will render the Calves of our Lips*; i. e. we will return to God such hearty Thanks for his Mercies, as shall be more acceptable to him than the Sacrifices of Calves or Sheep. The Phrase is translated by the LXX, the *Fruit of our Lips*; And so St Paul cites it, Heb. xiii, 15; *Let us offer the Sacrifice of Praise to God continually; that is, the Fruit*

*Fruit of our Lips, giving Thanks to his Name.* Sermon.  
III.

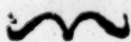
The Obligation to this Duty, is so evident and so reasonable, that it is sometimes in Scripture put for the whole of Religion; and the Neglect of it, marked as a total Defection from God. Thus St Paul, *Rom. i, 21*, describing the inexcusable Corruption of the Heathen World, puts it principally upon This; *because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were Thankful, but became vain in their Imaginations, and their foolish Heart was darkned.* They cou'd not but know God, by his Works; yet they were not *Thankful*, nor glorified him according to that Knowledge; *therefore*, says the Apostle, *they are without Excuse.* The plainer and more obvious the Duty is, and the more fully God has declared his Acceptance of it, to *Us* who enjoy the Advantage of Revelation; the more unworthy still, and the more inexcusable, is *Unthankfulness* and Neglect of him. 'Tis the perpetual Complaint of the Prophets in the Old Testament, that after all the great things that God had done for the Nation of the *Jews*, their Ingratitude was most provoking to him; *He made them ride on the high places*



*A Thanksgiving Sermon before*

Serm.

III.



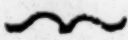
2 Kings,  
xviii; 3, 5.

*of the Earth, that they might eat the increase of the Fields, and suck Honey out of the Rock, and Oyl out of the flinty Rock:----But Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked;----he soon forsook the God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his Salvation, Deut. xxxii, 13. And 'tis recorded of a great and good King; one, concerning whom the Scripture testifies, that in other things he *did that which was right in the sight of the Lord*, so that before him there was none equal to him, neither after him arose there any like him; 'tis noted of *Him*, even of good King *Hezekiah*, as a very great blemish, as a thing very unnatural and unbecoming him, and at which God was highly displeased; that, after the Lord had destroy'd his Enemies, by *sending an Angel which cut off all the mighty Men of Valour, and the Leaders and Captains in the Camp of the King of Assyria*; and after he had miraculously caused him to recover from a mortal Disease; yet he *rendred not again according to the Benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up; therefore there was Wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem*, 2 Chron. xxxii; 21, 25.*

The many wonderful Victories that God has granted *Us*, over the Armies of  
a Prince

Serm.

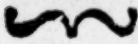
III.



a Prince more Potent than the King of *Affyria*; and who has often thought to swallow us up more easily, than *Sennacherib* did to destroy *Jerusalem*, and overrun the Land of *Judæa*; The many wonderful Victories, I say, which God has given *Us*, and particularly the great Successes wherewith he has blessed us this present Year, and for which we are now met together to return him Thanks; are such as will set as great or greater a mark of Ingratitude upon *Us*, if our real Thankfulness be not answerable to our outward Expressions of Joy, and our consequent Behaviour suitable to both.

The Fatigue and Length of the foregoing Campaign, which had been drawn out into the very midst of Winter; the extreme Rigour of the ensuing Season, and the Backwardness of the Spring, which occasioned such a scarcity of Forage, that it was impossible to open the Campaign before the Summer was far spent; and at the same time the Artifices made use of by our Enemies to amuse us with false Appearances and deceitful Insinuations of their Desire of Peace, and to try if from thence Means might be found to create any Divisions or Jealousies among the Allies; gave some hopes to *France*, that they should have been able to avoid

Serm. the Blow wherewith they were threatned;

III.  and that, by gaining Time, they might, at least for this Summer, have escaped the Danger to which by their former Losses they seem'd to be expos'd. But the Providence of God, directing our Counsels; the Unanimity and Steadiness of the Allies, the Prudence and Vigilance of our Generals, and the Indefatigableness of our Troops, entirely disappointed the Enemies Expectation: And the Campaign began with the taking of one of the strongest Fortresses in *Europe*; in the Fortifying of which, no Pains, no Cost had been spared, for a Trial how far it was possible to increase Strength by the Perfection of Art. To prevent further Losses of this kind, the Enemy resolv'd to hazard a Battle; yet in such Circumstances, that, according to the usual Measure and Judgment of Events in War, they thought themselves to run no *hazard*. But in the issue it appear'd, that thro' the Courage and Conduct of our Generals, whose Greatness as no History can parallel, so no Character can do Justice to; and thro' the Bravery and Intrepidity of our Troops, which as no Difficulties can withstand, so no Words can sufficiently express; those mighty Intrenchments, those double and  
treble

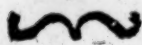


treble Defences, wherein the Enemies thought themselves so secure, served only to increase the Glory of the Arms of the Allies, and to convince the Enemy how little hopes remained of their ever gaining any Advantage over those Troops upon *equal* Ground, against whom they could not defend themselves upon the *most unequal*. Nevertheless, according to their usual *Vanity*, they boasted of a Victory; Unless we will rather ascribe it to their beginning to put on some degree of *Modesty*, when they declare they esteem it the noblest Atchievement and the greatest Height of their Glory, to have been able to make a *Retreat* after being beaten, with *less Loss than usual*. But in a Matter of this Nature, 'tis not of so much Importance what *Representations*, what *artful Descriptions* may be made of the Action itself: 'Tis the *Effect*, the *Consequences* of great Actions, that afford the truest Judgment of the Greatness of the Success. And here it was sufficiently evident *on which Side*, and *to what Degree*, Victory declar'd itself; when the immediate Consequence of the Battle, was the laying Siege to another strong Town, and the taking it in a very short time, without the Enemies being in a condition so much as to *offer at any Attempt* of coming to its Relief.

For

Serm.

III.

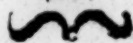


For these great and continu'd Successes, wherewith the Providence of God has vouchsafed to Bless us, let us make thankful Acknowledgment to his Divine Majesty, in the Words of *David*, 1 Chron. xxix, 11. *Thine, O Lord, is the Greatness, and the Power, and the Glory, and the Victory, and the Majesty; For all that is in the Heaven, and in the Earth, is thine; thine is the Kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as Head above all. Both Riches and Honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all, and in thine Hand is Power and Might, and in thine Hand it is to make Great, and to give Strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy Glorious Name.*

To neglect acknowledging the Hand of Providence in these great Events, would be not only base *Ingratitude* and *Unworthiness*, but also the greatest and most inexcusable *Inconsiderateness*. For since *the Race is not always to the Swift, nor the Battle to the Strong*; since the *Wiseest Counsels* do not always prosper, nor the best laid Designs constantly take Effect; but the Providence of God over-rules all Events, by secret and undiscern'd Springs; 'Tis to *his Blessing* wholly, we must thankfully acknowledge, that even the best concerted

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III.



certed Measures owe their Success. 'Tis by *his* Blessing, that *Unanimity* is preserv'd among *Allies*, that *Generals* are inspir'd with *Wisdom*, and *Troops* with *Undauntedness and Bravery*; And 'tis by the Continuance of the same Blessing, that *That Unanimity, Conduct and Courage*, are attended with Success. *Unanimity* has been, with the greatest Advantage, on our Enemies side: Their Soldiers sometimes have not been void of *Bravery*, nor their *Generals* of *Skill*. Yet have they been defeated in Battle after Battle, till the Strength of the potentest Monarch upon Earth has been almost entirely broken, and his Power reduc'd to an Extremity of Distress.

*The King shall mourn, and the Prince shall be cloathed with Desolation, and the* Ezek. vii. 27.

*Hands of the People of the Land shall be troubled; I will do unto them after their way, and according to their Deserts will I judge them: That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the Hand of the Lord has done this, and the Holy One of Israel has created it: That they may know that this is thy Hand, and that thou, Lord, hast done it.*

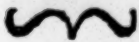
Isa. xli, 20.Pf. cix, 27.

Nor ought it to be omitted, that, next under *God* who is the first Author of all Victory, all due Honour and Acknowledgment



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III.



ledgment is to be paid to the *Instruments*, by which our Successes have been accomplish'd; the Wisdom and Conduct of the Generals, and the Bravery of those who executed their Commands. For, though Providence has indeed, in the whole Course of this War, very signally interpos'd in our behalf; yet not by immediate Miracle, as in the Days of *Jehosaphat* King of *Judah*, when it was said to them by the Prophet, 2 Chron. xx, 17, *Ye shall not need to fight in this Battle; set your selves, stand ye still, and see the Salvation of the Lord.* But the Blessings of Providence are convey'd to *Us*, thro' the Wisdom and Diligence of second Causes. For as, on the one hand without the Blessing of Providence, the greatest Wisdom of Man is Folly, and his Strength Weakness; and a *Horse is counted but a vain thing to save a Man, neither shall it deliver any Man by its great Strength*: So neither on the other hand have we Now any reason to expect, that Providence will work for us direct Miracles, but only blest the Endeavours of subordinate Causes. Wherefore all due Acknowledgments ought to be made to the Instruments, by whose Means we are deliver'd from our Enemies, and by whose Hands is work'd for us *the Salvation of God*. And 'tis noted in Scripture as a great

Pf. xxxiii,

17.

great Reproach upon the Children of *Israel*, that they were sometimes ungrateful to the Persons by whom God had work'd their Deliverance, and that they remember'd 'em not *according to all the Goodness that they had shew'd unto Israel*, Judg. viii, 35. Serm. III.

3. He that will *return Thanks* to God acceptably for past Mercies, so as to *Glorify* him *indeed*; must for the future *live suitably* to that Profession he pretends to make, of his Sense of God's Providence in governing the World, and of his entire Dependence upon it. *To him, that ordereth his Conversation aright.* The Expressions of our present Joy, must be such as become the Gospel of Christ; And the following Part of our Lives must show, that our Praises proceed not out of feigned Lips. Publick Praises and Thanksgivings are acceptable to God, as Part of our Religious Worship and Adoration of him; But 'tis Then only so, when the Declarations of our Mouths are the real Significations of the Intentions of our Hearts, and our Designs are not to abuse those Mercies which we thank him for. We must so return our Thanks for past Mercies, as that, by their having a due Influence upon us, we may show our selves worthy of the Continuance of them, and of God's bestowing

Serm. flowing still more upon us; and then our

III. Praise will be indeed an acceptable Sacrifice.

~~~~~ *Rejoice in the Lord, ye RIGHTEOUS,* saith the Psalmist; *for it becometh well the Just to be Thankful*, Psal. xxxi, 1. But of the *Wicked* it may truly be affirm'd, that as their *Prayer*, so their *Praise* also is *an Abomination to the Lord*.

Prov.
xxviii, 9

4. To them who thus *order their Conversation aright*, here is a Promise added of yet farther Blessings: *I will shew them the Salvation of God*. They who worthily express their Thanks for *past Mercies*, not by debauch'd and unseemly Mirth, but by truly honouring and fearing God, may reasonably hope for *more* occasions of praising him. If ye be *Willing and Obedient*, ye shall *eat the Fat of the Land*; and the Lord will *delight to do you good*. Our Praises and Thanksgivings for *past Victories*, if accompany'd with sincere Obedience, will be, like the lifting up of *Moses's Hands* upon the Mount, a certain Evidence of future Success. God has already blest the Endeavours of our Pious Queen with so great Prosperity, that we may justly say with the Psalmist, *Psal. xx, 6; Now know I that the Lord helpeth his Anointed, and will hear him from his Holy Heaven, even with the wholesome Strength of his Right hand*. Some put
their

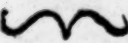
Isa. i, 19.

Exod.
xvii, 11.

their Trust in Chariots, and some in Serms.
Horses, but we will remember the Name III.
of the Lord our God: They are brought
down and fallen, but we are risen and
stand upright. Nay, we have reasonable

Grounds to apply to our Enemies the Prophet *Nabum's* Lamentation over the King of *Assyria*, ch. iii, v. 19. *There is no healing of thy Bruise, thy Wound is grievous; All that hear the Bruit of thee, shall clap their Hands over thee; for upon whom has not thy Wickedness pass'd continually? Or That of the Prophet Isaiah, ch. xiv, v. 16. They that see thee, shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the Man that made the Earth to tremble? That did shake Kingdoms? That made the World as a Wilderness, and destroy'd the Cities thereof? That open'd not the House of his Prisoners?* The sudden breaking of so great a Power, shows how easily Providence, if we prove ungrateful to him, can even yet disappoint our most probable Hopes, and, after all our Successes, bring us to Confusion. But the Example of Piety set us from the Throne, will, we hope, so effectually discourage all Immorality and Profaneness, and, by spreading its Influence afar, excite in the Nation such a Spirit of Virtue and true Religion, that God may be intreated
of

Serm. of us *to continue* to bless us with Success,

III.  till the present bloody and expensive War terminates in such a Peace, as may establish upon a lasting Foot the Liberties of Europe. *The humble shall see this, and be glad: And their Heart shall live, that seek God. For God will save Sion, and build the Cities of Judah, that Men may dwell there, and have it in possession: The Posterity also of his Servants shall inherit it; and they that love his Name, shall dwell therein.*

Pf. xxxiv,
2.

Pfal. lxix,
35.

I add only a Word of Exhortation, and so conclude.

The Ground of our rejoicing, and returning Thanks to God for the Successes of the present War, is, that those Successes tend to secure to us the Ends, for which the War was at first undertaken; *viz.* the *procuring a safe and lasting Peace, the Support and Establishment of the present Constitution of our Government, the maintaining the Rights and Liberties of our selves and all Europe, and the Preservation of the Protestant Religion among us.*

First therefore, if we will show ourselves truly Thankful for the Successes of the War, let us endeavour to maintain such Unanimity among ourselves, as may convince our Enemies they can have no
Hopes

Hopes of putting an end to the War, but by consenting to such a *Peace*, as may be *safe and lasting*. And let us so lay aside all unreasonable Divisions and private Animosities, that whensoever it shall please God to put a successful End to *the War abroad*, we may enjoy the blessed Effects of *Peace and Charity*, of *mutual Confidence and Agreement at home*.

Serm.
III.

Secondly, Let us heartily endeavour to promote the Interest of *that Government*, the Support and Establishment whereof is one principal Effect of the Successes for which we publicly return Thanks to God. Let us contribute our utmost, each in our proper Stations, to support a Government so happily establish'd; and to make the executive part of it as easy, and as little burdensome as possible, in the Hands wherein it is lodg'd. *To seek the Peace of the City or Country wherein we dwell, and in the Peace thereof to expect Peace*, is Men's Duty and Interest even under *bad Governments*: How much more, under the best and most wisely constituted Government in the World, under the easiest and gentlest Administration, under a Government wherein nothing else is design'd but the preserving the Publick Welfare and Happiness, the Security and Establishment of the Protestant Religion, the maintain-

Jer. xxix;

7.

G

ing

A Thanksgiving Sermon before

Serm. ing the Rights and Liberties both of Na-
 III. tions and of private Persons against Ty-
 ranny and Oppression; How much more,
 I say, in This case, must all such be
 utterly inexcusable, who, under any Pre-
 tences whatever, foment Divisions and
 Animosities, Jealousies and groundless Su-
 spicions, to weaken the Hands of the Go-
 vernment, and prevent the perfecting and
 securing upon a lasting Foot the fore-men-
 tion'd great and excellent Ends! We have
 been rescu'd by wonderful Deliverances,
 from the Rod of Arbitrary Power, from
 the Follies of Enthusiasm, and from the
 Superstitions of Popery: *Should we again*
grow weary of our own Happiness, and
despise the Liberty wherewith God has
blest us; should we again desire to joyn
in Affinity with the People of these Abo-
minations; would it not be just with God
to suffer them still to become Thorns in
our Sides, and their Gods to be a Snare
unto us, and that he should be angry with
us till he had consumed us? Ezra. ix, 12.

Thirdly, Let us take great Heed, lest by
 running into lawless and ungovernable Li-
 centiousness, we abuse and destroy those
Rights and Liberties, which have long
 been so earnestly and so justly contended
 for; and which the Successes we are now
 returning Thanks for, are the Means of

securing to us upon a solid Foundation. God has bless'd us with great and glorious Success against our *Foreign* Enemies; which we hope he will continue to us, till the *Liberties of Europe* be establish'd by a firm and lasting Peace. Let us not, after *That*, become Enemies to *Ourselves*, by a Licentiousness impatient of the most necessary Restraints; Lest by our own Unthankfulness and *Intestine* Confusions, we deprive ourselves of the Benefit of a Blessing purchas'd with so much Blood and Treasure; and provoke God to suffer us to destroy ourselves, by losing our *Liberty* wholly, while we affect more of it than is just and reasonable, or consistent with good Order and Government and the Publick Safety. For as, on the one hand, the Abuse of Arbitrary Power in *Governors*, has generally been the Occasion of putting People upon recovering the Liberties they had lost; so, on the other hand, Licentiousness or Abuse of Liberty in the *People*, tends always to such confusions, as terminate usually in Arbitrary Power again.

Fourthly, And above all, let us take care to *Practise* the Religion we *Profess*, and for the Preservation whereof we are so highly concern'd. One of the Principal Benefits of all the glorious Successes God has bless'd us with, is the securing the Re-

Serm. form'd Religion amongst us, against the

III. Attempts of Popish Superstition. But what

will it profit us, to bear the Name and Profession of a *Reform'd Religion*, if in our Practice and in Reality we have *no Religion at all*? Of what Use will it be to us, to be secur'd from the Vanities and Superstitions of Popery; if on the contrary we run into Atheism, Irreligion and Profaneness?

Christianity itself, our Saviour assures us, is of no Advantage to those who do not obey *the Will of his Father which is in Heaven*; But their Portion will be among *Unbelievers*. In like manner neither can any particular *Reformation of Religion* from the grossest Corruptions that have crept into it, be of any Benefit to those, whose *Manners* are not *reform'd* together with their Profession.

2 Cor. iv;
4. 6.

God, *who commandeth the Light to shine out of Darkness*, grant that *the Light of the Glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God*, may so shine in our *Hearts*, as that we may bring forth Fruit worthy of that *Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God, in the Face of Jesus Christ*.

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd before the

Q U E E N,

At St. James's Chapel, on *Wednesday* the 8th of *March*,
1709-10. being the Anniversa-
ry of Her Majesty's Happy Ac-
cession to the Throne.

Publish'd by Her MAJESTIES Special Command.

2 C H R O N. XXXI, 21.

*And in every Work that he began in the
Service of the House of God, and in
the Law, and in the Commandments
to seek his God, he did it with all his
Heart, and prospered.*

THERE is so necessary a Con- Serm.
nexion between the Happiness of IV.
Governors, and that of the Peo-
ple committed to their Charge; that as
there lies an indispensable Obligation upon
Princes

Serm. Princes and all that are in Authority, to
 IV. govern in the Ways of Piety and Righte-
 ~~~~~ ousness, in order to the Welfare and Pro-  
 sperity of the Publick, as well as upon ac-  
 count of their own private Duty to God;  
 so the People have always great Reason to  
 be very thankful to God, when under the  
 Administration of pious and religious  
 Princes, they enjoy both in the natural  
 course of things, the unspeakable Advan-  
 tages of Peace and good Government, and  
 have moreover a particular Title to the ex-  
 traordinary Blessings of Providence, and  
 to all the Promises God has made in Scrip-  
 ture to the Righteous, of national Pro-  
 sperity.

God, who is perfect Goodness, and who  
 communicates to all his Creatures such  
 proportions of Happiness, as is suitable to  
 the Original or improved Capacities of  
 their Natures; has so framed and consti-  
 tuted the Nature of Man in this present  
 State, that as *every particular Person*, with  
 regard to the Temper of his own Mind,  
 is in great measure either Happy or Mis-  
 erable within himself, in proportion as his  
 Passions are more or less subject to the Di-  
 rection and Government of right Reason;  
 so *Numbers of Men in Societies* likewise,  
 do proportionably either promote or de-  
 stroy each other's Happiness, as their Deal-  
 ings

ings One with Another are either just and righteous, equitable and charitable, honourable and publick-spirited; or, on the contrary, base and malicious, deceitful and unrighteous, violent and oppressive. The Happiness which Mankind would enjoy even here upon Earth, if all mens Passions were kept subject to Reason, and every private Interest made subservient to the publick; is greater than can be expressed in Words, or than can easily be conceived in the Imagination. And to preserve that Happiness constant and perpetual, among Persons of such a Disposition; there would be wanting little other *Government*, but that of Right Reason; and few other *Laws*, than only the Dictates of Conscience, which are the Law of the Most High. But this being the State, not of *Earth*, but of *Heaven*; not of the *present* World, but of the *New Heavens and New Earth*, wherein is to dwell universal Righteousness; That which in the next place is most desirable, and which is the highest degree of Happiness that can in Fact be attained to by Mankind here upon Earth; is, that the Practice of Righteousness and true Virtue may be established and encouraged by *Human Laws*; that the *Execution* of those Laws be intrusted in Just and Wise Hands;



Serm. and that Governors, both Supreme and subordinate, at the same time that they impartially administer Justice to others, be themselves *Examples* of that Virtue and Goodness, which the Design of all good Laws is to promote the Practise of. That so, those who *fear not God*, nor *love Righteousness*, may yet either thro' *Shame*, or *the Fear of Men*, be in some measure restrained within the Bounds of their Duty; And, if they will not, out of a Sense of Religion, endeavour to do *Good* in the World; yet at least, by the Coercion of wise Laws, they may be prevented from being able to do much *Mischief* in it.

As the *greatest Calamity* that can befall Mankind, is to be left in a State of *absolute Anarchy and Confusion*, to devour each other like wild Beasts; in a State, wherein Force gives Right to all manner of Oppression, and Fraud and Violence are practised with all Impunity and without Restraint: And the *Next* to this extreme Calamity, is *bad Government*; wherein either Laws promote the Mischiefs they ought to prevent; or Governors, against Law, encourage those very Practises which 'tis the whole Intention of their Office to restrain; and Princes become Terrors to their Neighbours, and Destroyers of their own Subjects; and the Oppressed  
cry

cry, and no Man delivers them; and Violence sits in the Seat of Judgment, and Extortion and Rapine are established as it were by a Law: As such *bad Government*, I say, is the Next great Calamity to having *no Government at all*; So, on the contrary, *next* to that Angelical State, that *State of Paradise*, wherein there would be little need of any other Laws or Authority than the Fear of God; the *next great Blessing* Mankind is capable of, is *Good Government*: Government, which truly answers the design of its establishment; which, in real Effects, represents the Divine Authority; which, by the whole Exercise of its Power, promotes the Honour of God in the World, and the publick Welfare and Happiness of Mankind.

Accordingly, the principal Instruments which God generally makes use of, either in conveying his greatest Temporal Blessings to Mankind, or in inflicting his severest Punishments on any Nation or People, are *Good* or *Bad Princes*.

'Tis remarkable in the History of the Jewish Nation, that when *they rejected the Lord, that he should not reign over them*, 1 Sam. viii, 7; the Threatning wherewith the Prophet was commanded to endeavour to deter them from their disobedient Purpose, was This; *ver. 9. Protest*

Serm. *test solemnly unto them, and show them*

IV. *the Manner of the King that shall reign  
over them.---He will take your Sons, and  
appoint them for himself, for his Chariots,  
and to be his Horsemen; and some shall  
run before his Chariots: And he---will  
set them to ear his ground, and to reap  
his Harvest, and to make his instruments  
of War, and instruments of his Chari-  
ots; And he will take your Fields and  
your Vineyards and Oliveyards, even  
the best of them, and give them to  
his Servants.---And ye shall cry out in  
that day, and the Lord will not hear you.*

There have been some so unreasonable, as to interpret this Passage, not as a threatening of Punishment express'd in the Character of a bad Government, but as a Delegation of that Power which God intended All Governors should have a Right to exercise. But the whole Scope and Connexion of the Words, evidently shows the contrary. And the Histories of the Eastern Nations of the World, who have long lived under the Exercise of such absolute Arbitrary Dominion, shows how inexpressibly great a Calamity such Governments are to Mankind. And the Experience even of a neighbouring Nation alone, which from one of the potentest and most flourishing Kingdoms upon Earth, has



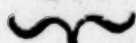
has been reduced even to the extremest degree of Misery; is a sufficient evidence of this Truth. Most reasonably therefore, and as a most proper Argument to deter the *Jews* from continuing in their wanton Disposition of rebelling against God's Government, might the Prophet threaten them with being made subject to such a Dominion.

Serm.  
IV.

On the contrary, in those Passages of Scripture, wherein are promised the greatest Temporal Blessings that God ever bestows on any Nation or People, such Promises are frequently and most emphatically express'd under descriptions of mild and gentle Governments; of Governments wherein Justice is establish'd by wise Laws, or administer'd by the Will of Righteous Princes. In the *lxxii<sup>d</sup> Psalm*, the Description of a Prince, the Greatness and Prosperity of whose Government was to be a Type of the Blessedness of the Kingdom of the *Messiah*; is this. *He shall judge the People according unto Right, and defend the Poor:---He shall keep the simple folk by their Right, defend the Children of the Poor, and punish the Wrong Doer:---He shall come down like the Rain into a Fleece of Wool, even as the drops that water the Earth; In his time shall the Righteous flourish, yea and abundance of*  
Peace

Serm.

IV.



*Peace so long as the Moon endureth:-----*

*He shall deliver the Poor when he crieth, the Needy also, and him that hath no Helper: He shall be favourable to the Simple and Needy, and shall preserve the Souls of the Poor.* And in the Lx. Chapter of *Isaiah*, the final restoration of *Jerusalem*, which perhaps is no other than a Description of the Happiness of the *Heavenly State* it self; because a nobler and loftier Figure could not be borrow'd from any thing to be found on Earth, is express'd by This Similitude: *ver. 17. I will make thy Officers Peace, and thine Exactors Righteousness: Violence shall no more be heard in thy Land, wasting nor destruction within thy Borders; but thou shalt call thy Walls Salvation, and thy Gates Praise:----- Thy people also shall be all righteous.*

Some Proportions of this Blessedness, both by the natural Consequence of things, and by the positive direction and interposition of Providence, do, even in this present mixt and uncertain State of things, always attend any Nation; when Unrighteousness and Debauchery are in any measure discourag'd by the good Disposition of the People, or by the pious Indeavours of a Wise and Religious Governor. We of this Nation have (thanks be to God) experienc'd

rienc'd good and very great Effects of this Kind: And, was it not for our Unthankfulness and Unworthy Returns for God's Blessings, we might have reason still to expect more. The Jewish Nation, whose

Serm.

IV.

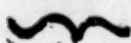
History was written for our Example, was always blessed with singular Prosperity, when under any pious Prince they lived in remarkable Obedience to the Law of God; and never in a more conspicuous manner, than in the days of that excellent Person, of whom it is recorded in the Words of the Text, that *in every Work that he began in the Service of the House of God, and in the Law, and in the Commandments to seek his God, he did it with all his Heart, and Prospered.*

The Words are part of the Character of that pious Prince *Hezekiah* King of *Judah*, of whom the Scripture tells us, that *he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his Father had done*; and that he kept such a Passover, as *had not been kept before, from the days of David unto that Day*; and that he wrought that which was good and right and truth, before the Lord his God; and *in every work that he began in the Service of the House of God, and in the Law, and in the Commandments to seek his God, he did it with all his*



Serm.

IV.



*his Heart*: And the Text adds, that he *Prospered*; and that God blessed him according to his singular Piety. For when *Sennacharib* King of *Assyria* came up against him and against *Jerusalem* with a mighty Host to take it, the *Lord* sent an *Angel*, (2 Chr. xxxii, 21.) *which cut off all the mighty Men of valour, and the Leaders and Captains in the Camp of the King of Assyria, so that he returned with shame of face to his own Land*; And the *Lord* saved *Hezekiah* and guided him on every side, and he was magnified in the sight of all Nations from thenceforth, v. 23. We cannot in this profane and licentious Age, apply to our selves the Zeal wherewith the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem* assisted their pious King in his earnest Endeavours to restore among them the Religion and Piety of their Ancestors: Neither, if we could, had we any warrant to expect such *miraculous* interpositions of the immediate hand of God on our behalf, as his peculiar People then experienc'd. But the endeavours of that pious Prince, whom God has now set over us, to discourage all Immorality, Debauchery and Profaneness, and to promote the practise of true Religion and Piety in this Nation; are not inferior to the good Dispositions of any of the pious Kings of *Judah*: Nor

are

are the Successes wherewith the Providence of God has bless'd us in this Auspicious Reign, against the common Enemies of our Religion and Liberties; much less remarkable, than the Deliverances work'd formerly by direct Miracle for the Children of *Israel*.

In the Words we may observe,

I. That the first and principal care of good Princes, is to promote the interest of true *Religion and Virtue among the People* committed to their charge. *In every work that he began in the Service of the House of God, and in the Law and in the Commandments, to seek his God; he did it with all his Heart.* Princes are the Vicegerents of God upon Earth; intrusted with Power from him for the Government of Men in Societies, and for the maintenance of Peace and Justice and good Order in the World. This Power is vested in different Hands, and limited with different Regulations, and exercised in different Manners, according to the Laws and Customs of different Nations; But the Power itself is of Divine Original and Appointment, being the Ordinance and Constitution of God; For which reason Governors, both Supreme and Subordinate, are stiled in Scripture, *Gods*, and the immediate Ministers of God. Having therefore this Power by  
Di-

Serm. Divine Appointment, and representing

IV. God in the Exercise of it; 'tis manifest their

first and chiefest Care ought to be, to imploy it in advancing *his* Honour and Glory, from whom they received it. Power without Goodness, and Wisdom not imployed in the promoting of Righteousness, is the justest Object of Mens Fear and Aversion: But when those who are the Ministers of God in the exercise of Power, imitate him also in that more lovely Perfection of Goodness; and make it their principal Business to encourage that universal Virtue, the Establishment of which in the World, is in the most acceptable manner fulfilling the Will of God, and promoting his Honour and Glory; then do they most eminently verify that Character the Scripture gives of them, *I have said ye are Gods, and ye are all the Children of the Most High.* The Instructions upon this Head, given by *David* in his dying Words, are very remarkable, 2 *Sam.* xxiii, 1. *These be the last Words of David: David the Son of Jesse said; and the Man who was raised up on high, the Anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet Psalmist of Israel said; The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his Word was in my Tongue; The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me: He that ruleth*  
over



over Men must be just, ruling in the Fear of God. He must *Himself* rule in the Fear of God ; and he must make it his chief and principal Care, to cause *Others* to fear him likewise. Accordingly we find the principal part of the Character of all the good Kings of *Judah*, whose History is related in Scripture ; taken from their Zeal to promote the Service and Worship of God, and the Establishment of true Religion in their Kingdom. Many of the Methods they used, agreeable to the then present State and Circumstances of Things, and to the extraordinary Commissions they had ; are by no means indeed to be imitated under the Gospel-State, or drawn into Example by the practise of Christian Princes, who have no such special and immediate Warrants from God : But in general 'tis still their Duty, by all wise and Christian Methods, by all Methods suitable to the Nature and Design of the Gospel, to employ the Power and Authority God has given them, in promoting the Interest of true Religion, in encouraging Virtue and discouraging Vice. It is still true, that *a wise King scattereth the Wicked, and bringeth the Wheel over them*, Prov. xx, 26. 'Tis still true, that *Rulers are not a Terror to good Works, but to the Evil* ; that the Magistrate, su-  
H
preme

Serm.  
IV.

Serm. preme or subordinate, beareth not the  
 IV. *Sword in vain; for he is the Minister of  
 God, a Revenger to execute Wrath upon  
 him that doth Evil, Rom. xiii, 4; that  
 he is sent of God for the Punishment of  
 evil doers, and for the Praise of them that  
 do well, 1 Pet. ii, 14.*

The only Caution here necessary to be us'd, is; that true Religion, in the promoting whereof the principal Care of good Princes is to be imployed, be always understood to consist; not in Matters of Notion, Speculation, and Dispute; not in Questions of Controversie, and uncertain Opinions; not in Matters of mere Humane and Temporary Authority; but in Obedience to the plain Precepts of the Gospel of Christ; in the great and Fundamental Duties of Piety towards God, Righteousness towards Men, and Temperance in the Government of ourselves; on the Practise of which, depends the Happiness of this Life, and of that which is to come: And that the things to be principally discouraged by them, are Profaneness and Impiety, Unrighteousness and Iniquity, Debauchery and all Immorality.

Now as the *Nature and Derivation* of their Authority itself, so likewise the *End and Design* of all Government, obliges good

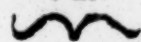
good Princes to make the promoting of Religion and Virtue among the People, their principal and greatest Care. For the ultimate End and Design of all Government, is the Peace and Safety, the Welfare and Prosperity of the Publick, of the Society or Community united under such a Form of Government. Now 'tis manifest that nothing promotes this great End, so much as the practise of Religion and true Virtue. For Virtue and a true sense of Religion, obliges every Subject, every Member of the Society, in whom it is found; it obliges him *beforehand*, by a much stronger and securer Tie, to do all the same things *freely and willingly, heartily and sincerely, in publick and in private*; which the best and wisest Laws can but compel those who want such a Sense of Religion, to do *unwillingly, slightly and superficially, in publick appearance only, and in the sight of Men*. Religion therefore and true Virtue, if they prevailed in the World, would obtain the same End *fully and effectually*, which the best and wisest Laws can do but *in part*; And Laws are made only to supply, in the best manner they can, the want of true Religion and Virtue among Men. *The Law is not made for a Righteous Man, but for the Lawless and Disobedi-*



Serm. *ent, for the Ungodly and for Sinners, for*  
 IV. *the Unholy and the Profane, 1 Tim. i, 9.*

For the same reasons therefore, that 'tis very necessary for the establishment of good Government in the World, that Men should be perpetually under the restraint of wise and wholesome *Laws*; for the same reasons 'tis much more desirable, (and ought to be the great Aim and Design, the main and constant Endeavour of those in Power and Authority,) that *Religion and true Virtue* should universally prevail; the want of which only it is, that introduces the necessity of any coercive *Laws* or Penalties at all.

The *Means* by which good Princes are to promote the Practise of true Religion in the World, is not (as was before observed,) by putting difficulties upon such as are weak or erroneous, in matters of Speculation and Dispute, or in the Externals of Religion; but by securing the Foundation of Virtue and good Manners, upon which the Happiness of a Nation does most immediately depend; by maintaining the Honour of God, and keeping up a due sense and acknowledgment of his Providence, in the Minds of Men; by preserving Faithfulness and Truth, Integrity and Uncorruptness in the transacting and managing of all publick and private Affairs;



Affairs ; and by effectually discouraging all Immorality and Debauchery, which enfeeble the Spirits, and destroy the Power and Honour of a Nation.

This is principally done by good *Example*, and by countenancing such as are desirous to follow it. For as the Sun diffuses Heat and Vigor, together with its Rays of Light, thro' the spacious Universe ; and insensibly promotes in all things, by its powerful Influence, both Life and Growth, Motion and Action ; so the Example of a pious Prince, gives far greater countenance to Religion, than the strictest Laws ; encourages well-disposed Persons, and gives Life and Spirit to all pious Designs ; makes Vice and Immorality ashamed to show its Head ; or at least gives a check to the more open Profaneness, of such as would publickly despise and throw contempt upon Religion : Whereas, on the contrary, when the Supreme Authority of a Nation, when the *Light of the World*, is it self *Darkness* ; how great must that *Darkness* be ? When the *Head is sick* and the *whole Heart faint*, what Health and Soundness can the whole Body enjoy ?

Further : The *next* Means, by which good Princes may promote the interest of Religion, and the practise of Virtue in the World ; next to the incou-

Serm. ragement afforded by their own good Ex.  
 IV. ample; is by taking all fit care, that Men  
 ~~~~~ be not corrupted in their first Principles by  
 Ignorance and gross Neglect, by Careles-
 ness and want of due Instruction. 'Tis
 recorded of *Jehoshaphat* King of *Judah*,
 as a most remarkable part of his good
 Character, *That he sent to his Princes,*
and appointed Levites and Priests to
teach in the Cities of Judah; and they
had the Book of the Law of the Lord
with them, and went about throughout
all the Cities of Judah, and taught the
people; 2 Chr. xvii, 7. And in this particu-
 lar, as her present Majesty has exceeded
 the Piety even of the best and most reli-
 gious Princes among her Predecessors, by
 considerably augmenting out of her own
 Revenue the maintenance of those who
 by Divine Appointment are set apart to
 the Office of teaching and instructing Men
 in matters of Religion; so, That charita-
 ble disposition which seems daily to in-
 crease and spread in the Nation, of edu-
 cating and instructing poor Children in the
 Principles of Religion, and in the Methods
 of Industry and honest Labour, it may
 reasonably be hoped will contribute in
 due time to the accomplishment of that
 Prophecy, that *the Earth shall be full of*
the Knowledge of the Lord, as the Wa-
ters cover the Seas, 2. 'Tis

2. 'Tis observed in the Text, that the Serm. IV.
Effect of Princes making it their chief care to promote the Interest of true Religion and Virtue; is, *the Prosperity of Themselves and their People. In every Work that he began, in the service of the House of God, and in the Law, and in the Commandments, to seek his God; he did it with all his Heart, and Prosper'd.*

In the parallel place, 2 Kings xviii, 7, the word *Prospered* is thus more largely expressed; *the Lord was with him, and he prospered, whithersoever he went forth.*

We find in the Histories both of ancient and modern times, that it has *sometimes* indeed happened otherwise; and that good and pious Princes have, for the Sins and Iniquities of their People, or for other secret and wise Reasons of Providence, been very unsuccessful in their Affairs, and fallen under great Calamities. But generally speaking, and in the usual course of Providence, good and religious Princes have been blessed with Success, and great Prosperity. And of this, there are two obvious reasons. *First*, the natural Tendency of the thing itself. When Princes govern in the Fear of God, according to Law and Equity, being Ministers of God to the People for good, and having no other Interest but the Welfare

H 4 of

Serm. of the Publick; *Mercy and Truth* will
 IV. *preserve* their Persons, and their *Thrones*

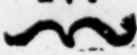
will be *upholden by Mercy*, Prov. xx, 28.
 When *Kings* become *nursing Fathers*,
 and *Queens nursing Mothers* to the Church
 of God; and the Example of their Vir-
 tue and Piety, renders them as conspicu-
 ous as their high Station: The Hearts of
 the Subjects will naturally be filled with
 Love and Affection, with Esteem and Ve-
 eneration for them, as well as with a Sense
 of Duty towards them; and the Authori-
 ty they are vested with, will be only such
 a paternal Care, in the exercise of which
 they will justly be lookt upon and ho-
 noured as *Benefactors*. This is very ele-
 gantly express'd by *David* in the place
 before-cited; where, after those Words of
 Instruction, *He that ruleth over Men*
must be just, ruling in the Fear of God,
 he immediately adds, *And he shall be as*
the Light of the Morning, when the Sun
arises, even a Morning without Clouds;
as the tender Grass springing out of the
Earth, by clear shining after Rain, 2 Sam.
 xxiii, 4. When, in consequence of this,
 the People obeys, not only for Fear, but
 also for Conscience-sake; and not for
 Conscience-sake only, but also out of
 Love and Choice, in a Sense of their
 own Happiness: When they become una-
 nimous

animous in their Counsels and Designs; and every one, free from all Fear of any Incroachment upon their just Rights, their Liberties and Properties, discharges his Duty in his proper Station with Fidelity and Cheerfulness: This, in the nature of things, will establish a Government with firmness and security at home; and spread Dread and Terror, upon its *Enemies abroad. Righteousness*, in the natural Tendency of the thing itself, *will exalt a Nation*; as, on the contrary, *Sin* will be a *Reproach to any People*. But *Secondly*; the Providence of God, does moreover in a peculiar manner most frequently concern itself, in blessing and prospering the Designs of pious Princes: *The King that faithfully judges the Poor, his Throne shall be established for ever*, Prov, xxix, 14. Notwithstanding the greatest natural Security from second Causes, yet, *except the Lord keep the City, the Watch-man Soldier may awake in vain*. Here therefore is the establishment of the Throne of the Righteous; that it is under the sure protection of *him*, whose *Kingdom ruleth over all*. We read, 2 Chron. xvii, 10, (where is set down the good Character before-cited of *Jehoshaphat* King of *Judah*;) that the *Lord was with him*, and *established the Kingdom in his Hand*; and

Serm. *and the fear of the Lord fell upon all*
 IV. *the Kingdoms of the Lands that were*
 ~~~~~ *round about Judah, so that they made*  
*no War against Jehoshaphat. And We*  
*of this Nation enjoy at this Day the hap-*  
*py Effects of the Blessings of Providence*  
*upon the pious Princeſs he has ſet over us ;*  
*in giving Her ſuch ſignal Successeſſes againſt*  
*the common Enemy, as we may reaſona-*  
*bly hope will ſoon terminate in a Safe,*  
*Honourable, and Laſting Peace.*

3. It remains in the *Third* and laſt place, by way of Application, to conſider briefly what the *Duty* of Subjects is, who have the Happineſs of living under ſuch Governors, as follow the Example, and answer the Character given of good King *Hezekiah* in the Text.

And 1<sup>st</sup>. 'Tis their Duty to return Thanks to God, for the Benefits they enjoy under the happy Influence of a Pious Example and a Wiſe Adminiſtration. 'Tis St *Paul's* Exhortation, not only to *pray*, but alſo to *give thanks*, for *Kings, and for all that are in Authority* ; as being thoſe under whoſe Protection *we lead a quiet and peaceable Life*, and by whoſe Care we are encouraged to live *in all Godlineſs and Honesty*. To be thankful to God, whoſe Inſtruments and Vicegerents pious Governors are ; (and who is therefore

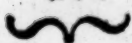
*in this respect* in a more especial manner Serm.  
 the Principal and Supreme Cause of the IV.  
 Blessings conveyed to Us through Their   
 Hands;) *is rendring unto God the things*  
*that are Gods*, at the same time that we  
 make just acknowledgment to *Cæsar* of  
 what is due to *Cæsar*.

And as we must not be unthankful to  
 God, for Blessings received; so we must  
 take care, not to express our Joy and  
 Gratitude in an improper manner. We  
 must declare our Thankfulness, not by  
 unseemly Mirth, not in Rioting and De-  
 bauchery; but by the sincere Practise of  
 That Religion, the Preservation of which  
 is the Conclusion of all our Prayers; and  
 by Acts of steddy Affection to That Go-  
 vernment, the Support of which is the  
 Foundation of all our Hopes.

2dly. 'Tis the Duty of Subjects under  
 pious Governors, not only to acknow-  
 ledge, that, *seeing by Them they enjoy*  
*great Quietness, and that very worthy*  
*Deeds are done unto the Nation by Their* *Acts xxiv.*  
*Providence, therefore they accept it al* <sup>2.</sup>  
*ways and in all places with all Thank-*  
*fulness*; But they must show forth their  
 real Gratitude, by imitation of the Exam-  
 ple set them from the Throne, and by a  
 strict Observation of the Laws against Pro-  
 faneness, Debauchery and Immorality, so  
 often

Serm.

IV.



often recommended to them from thence, as the only certain means of securing the Continuance of the Favour and Blessing of God, both upon Them and their Prince. They must show forth their Gratitude by uniting all Hearts and Hands to promote, each in their proper Station, with all Diligence and Faithfulness, the Safety and Honour of the Government; by laying aside all private Animosities and Contentions among themselves; and by putting a stop (as much as in them lies) to all groundless Jealousies and unreasonable Suspicions, which tend to abate Mens Affection towards their Governors, and to bring Difficulties upon the Administration of publick Affairs.

3<sup>dly</sup>. 'Tis the Duty of Subjects under All, and much more under Pious and Religious Governours, to offer up constantly for them, according to the Exhortation of the Apostle, *Supplications, Prayers and Intercessions*; That God would be pleased to give them Understanding and Knowledge, Strength and Ability, to go *in and out before a great People*; that he would enable them to bear the great Weight and Burden of Publick Business, assist them to undergo the manifold Difficulties arising from the Uncertainties of all Humane Affairs, and bless them in all their



their Just Undertakings, with Prosperity and Success. God has hitherto blessed her present Majesty with unparallel'd Success, against the Common Enemy of our Religion and Liberties: 'Tis Our Duty to pray for a Continuation of the same Success, till the War abroad shall be brought to its desired Conclusion; and that, after That, we may be made a happy People at home, by Peace and Unity and mutual Confidence among our selves; by a firm Establishment of the wise Constitution of our Government, for a *Succession* of many Generations; by a sincere Reformation of Manners among all sorts and degrees of Men; and an universal hearty Concern for the great and weightier Matters of Religion, more than for things of Controversie and uncertain Dispute: That Humility, Love and Peaceableness, Righteousness and Equity, Diligence, Faithfulness and Truth, may possess the Hearts of Men of all Ranks and Conditions among us: That God would be pleased to inspire Her Majesty with a discerning Heart, a wise and understanding Spirit; to bless Her with Able Counsellors, with Righteous and Just Officers in all Places of Trust; with a Dutiful and Obedient People: That *the Queen* may rejoice in thy Strength, O Lord, and  
be

Serm. *be exceeding glad of thy Salvation: That*  
 IV. *thou mayest give Her her Hearts Desire,*  
 and not deny Her the Request of Her  
*Lips: That thou mayest prevent Her with*  
*the Blessings of Goodness, and make Her*  
*Honour great in thy Salvation, and*  
*crown Her with Glory and great Wor-*  
*ship: That thou mayest give Her a long*  
*Life here, and a longer and happier here-*  
*after, even for ever and ever.*



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A  
S E R M O N

Preach'd in the

Parish-Church of St James's Westminster,

On Tuesday November 7, 1710,

Being the Day of Thanksgiving  
for the Successes of the fore-go-  
ing Campaign.

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P S A L. CXLV, 2.

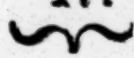
*Every day will I bless thee, and I will  
praise thy Name for ever and ever.*

**T**HE particular Occasion, upon which this Psalm was composed, is not known: But in general, that it was occasioned by some extraordinary Blessing, such as Success and Victory over powerful Enemies, or some other the like remarkable Interposition of Providence; is evident from the whole Course of the Psalm For the Author of it, beginning with high Expressions of Joy and Thankfulness, (v. 1.) *I will extoll thee,*  
O God,

Serm.  
V.



Serm. O God, my King, and will bless thy Name

IV.  for ever and ever; every day will I bless thee, and I will praise thy Name for ever and ever; proceeds in the 4th Verse to declare, that the Ground of this his Joy and Thankfulness, was some mighty Act; some publick and eminent interposition of Providence in his behalf: One generation, says he, shall praise thy Works to another, and shall declare thy mighty Acts; I will speak of the glorious Honour of thy Majesty, and of thy wondrous Works; and Men shall speak of the Might of thy terrible Acts, and I will declare thy Greatness: And ver. 11, They shall speak of the Glory of thy Kingdom, and talk of thy Power; to make known to the Sons of Men his mighty Acts, and the glorious Majesty of his Kingdom. After which he goes on, from the consideration of past Mercies, to infer the reasonableness of Mens depending upon the same Providence for the continuance of his Protection in time to come; if by a religious Behaviour they approve themselves worthy of his Care and Favour. Ver. 18. The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all them that call upon him faithfully; he will fulfil the desire of them that fear him, he also will hear their Cry and will save them: The Lord

*Lord preserveth all them that love him, but all the wicked will he Destroy.* And then he concludes in the last Verse, with Expressions of Joy and Thanksgiving, as he began in the first; *My Mouth shall speak the Praise of the Lord, and let all Flesh bless his holy Name for ever and ever.*

Serm.  
V.

The Application of this Discourse of the Psalmist, to our *present* Occasion; is very obvious. God has done for *Us*, things no less wonderful and remarkable, than for the *Jews* of old; and it becomes *Us* to praise him after the same Pattern, which the inspired Psalmist drew up for *Their* Use. It becomes *Us every day* to give *Thanks* unto him, and to *praise his Name for ever and ever*. It concerns us to take heed that we behave ourselves worthily, upon the Mercies we have received; that we be found in the Number of those that *love him*, and of those that *call upon him in Faithfulness and Truth*. And when *this* is our Case; then it will become us with humble Confidence, to depend upon his Promise for further Protection; that he who is *righteous in all his Ways*, and *holy in all his Works*, will continue to be *nigh unto us*; to *preserve* and support us; and be always ready,

Serm. to hear and *fulfil the desire* of them that  
 V. *fear and obey him.*

~~~~~ The Words of the Text, consist of two  
 Parts;

1st. A Declaration of That *Disposition of Mind*, which ought to be found in such Persons, as have received great Mercies from God; And,

2^{dly}. An account of the *outward Effects* of that pious Disposition, in Acts of publick Praise and Thanksgiving to God.

The former, is a grateful and due *Sense* of God's Goodness. The latter, is the *Fruit and Consequence* of that just Sense of things upon the Mind; showing forth it self in external Acts of Worship, and in calling upon others to join with us in *publishing* the Praises of Him, whose Power is so conspicuous in all great Events, and whole *tender Mercies are over all his Works*.

But there is no need to insist separately upon each Part of this Distinction; because, though the things themselves are really *distinct*, yet they must always be supposed to *accompany* each other. For where the Mind is *inwardly* and deeply possessed with a just Sense of the Goodness of God, the *external Behaviour* cannot but of necessity be answerable to the *inward*

ward Sense and Disposition of the Mind: Sermon.
And where the *outward Actions* are full V.
of proper Expressions of Gratitude, and
professed Acknowledgments of the Divine
Goodness; though *God only* can *know* the
Heart, yet *Men* must always charitably
suppose, that the *inward Sense* and Dispo-
sition of the *Mind*, is agreeable to the
Character of the *outward Action*. There
is no need therefore for *Us* to distinguish,
between *Thankfulness* as 'tis a Habit and
Temper of the *Mind*, or as 'tis an *Expres-*
son of That Temper in our *Behaviour and*
Actions. For these things ought always
to go together, as in sincere Persons they
really do: And in the unsincere, where
they do not, yet to the Eye of the World,
which is all *We* can judge of, they must
of necessity appear to do so. *We* can-
not, therefore, but treat of these things
as Synonymous; and, when we exhort
Men to the Duty of Thankfulness, must
always understand those *external Actions*,
which are the *proper Expressions*, and ought
always to be the *real Significations*, of a
grateful Mind. Wherefore, without di-
stinguishing between these two Branches,
we may look upon the Text as one sin-
gle Proposition; and take the latter Part,
as only an Explication of the former. *E-*
very day will I bless thee; or, as it is in

Serm. the Old Translation, *Every day will I*
 V. *give Thanks unto thee; and praise thy*
 ~~~~~ *Name for ever and ever.*

That which is more particularly remarkable in the Words; is the Expression, *Every day*. As if *every day* of our Lives, were to be a day of Thanksgiving; and our Expressions of Gratitude, as uninterrupted as our Breath. The meaning is; that, as we are directed by the Apostle to *Pray without ceasing*; and, by our Lord, to petition our Heavenly Father constantly for the continuance of our *daily* Food, in acknowledgment of our perpetual Dependence upon Providence, for the very Breath we draw, and for the Bread we *daily* eat: so we ought to be no less constantly and habitually Thankful to God for the Benefits *we have received*, than we are importunate in our Petitions to him for the Things *we want*. In every thing giving Thanks, as St Paul expresses it, 1 *Thes.* v, 18; and *Eph.* v, 20, *Giving Thanks always for all things unto God, even the Father, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

There are some things, which we enjoy in common with *all the Creatures* of God; Life and Breath, and the common Protection and Preservation of Providence. And for these, we are to join in that great  
 and

and universal Choir, which St *John* in his Vision so elegantly describes, *Rev. v, 13*; and *iv, 11*; *Every Creature which is in Heaven and on the Earth, and under the Earth, and such as are in the Sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying;-----Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive Glory and Honour and Power; for thou hast created all Things, and for thy Pleasure they are, and were created.* There are other Gifts, peculiar to *Men*; Understanding and Knowledge, Reason and the Use of Speech, a Capacity of Searching out and Meditating upon the Works of God. And for These Faculties, we are to express our Gratitude, by employing them in his Service; by promoting his Glory; and by so behaving ourselves in the exercise of our Dominion over the inferior Creation, that *all the Works* of God, over which he has made *Man* the Lord, may with *Our Tongues praise him, and magnify him for ever.*

There are other Blessings peculiar to particular *Nations*: And for these we are to glorify God, by a particular Thankful Acknowledgment, and by the proper Use of such respective Blessings.

If the Providence of God has planted us in a *fruitful* Country, and his Goodness successively crowns our Years with a



Serm. perpetual *Increase*; we are then to express  
V. our Thankfulness by Temperance and So-

*When thou hast eaten and art full, said Moses in his last and wise Exhortation to the Israelites; then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good Land which he hath given thee. Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his Commandments, and his Judgments and his Statutes, which I command thee this Day; Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly Houses, and dwelt therein;-----and thy Silver and thy Gold,-----and all that thou hast, is multiplied; then thine Heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God, &c. Deut. viii, 10.*

If God has indued us with *Learning* and *Wisdom*, with Understanding and Knowledge, above other Nations of our Fellow-creatures; whom we are too apt to despise under the Name of *Barbarians*; tyrannizing over their Weakness, and insulting over their Ignorance; not considering who it is that has *taught* Any of

us more than the Beasts of the Field, and made us Wiser than the Fowls of Heaven: The proper way wherein our Gratitude should show forth itself for *these* things, is in applying Learning to the Advantage of Religion, and to the promoting of the Glory of God in the World; by increasing *real Knowledge*, and not perplexing it with *imaginary Subtilties*; by discovering *Truth*, and not colouring over *Errors*; by propagating what is *Certain*, and not contending for *disputable Opinions*.

Serm.  
V.

Job xxxv,  
11.

If God has vouchsafed us *the glorious Light of the Gospel*, and the *Knowledge of his Son our Saviour Jesus Christ*; while many other Nations lie yet in the Darkneſs of Heatheniſm, and have not the Knowledge of the Laws of God: The beſt and moſt acceptable Method of returning our Thanks for ſo inestimable a Bleſſing; is, that we endeavour to propagate the Chriſtian Knowledge with Simplicity to *Others*; and that we take care above all things to obey the Truth *ourselves*, in the Love and in the Purity thereof.

If God has not only placed us under the Light of the Goſpel, but bleſſed us alſo yet further with greater *Purity* of Religion, by a *Reformation* from the

Serm. *gross*est Errors and idolatrous Supersti-  
 V. tions, wherewith even the Christian

World itself had been almost universally  
 overspread, thro' the Corruption of that  
*Mother of Harlots and Abominations of*  
 the Earth, which hath made all Na-  
 tions to drink of the Wine of her For-  
 nication, and in whom is found the  
 Blood of the Prophets and Saints and  
 of all that are slain upon the Earth:  
 If God, I say, has blessed us with a Re-  
 formation from these grossest of Cor-  
 ruptions; the most suitable Return of  
 Thankfulness for such an Advantage, is  
 to pursue the Spirit and Design of that  
 Reformation; and to take great Care,  
 that we be not deluded insensibly to fall  
 back again, and join in affinity with the  
 people of these Abominations; but that  
 we stedfastly take more and more heed,  
 without regard to any Human Authority  
 whatsoever, and without calling any Man  
 Father or Master upon Earth, to adhere to  
 the Divine Authority of the Scriptures  
 only, as the Adequate Rule of Faith and  
 Manners; which is the sole Foundation  
 of the Protestant Religion, and the only  
 effectual means of preventing all Diffe-  
 rences among those who sincerely desire  
 to understand and practise the Truth.

Rev. xvii,  
 5, 14. viii,  
 18, 24.

Ezra ix, 14.

Mat. xxiii,  
 9.



If God has preserved unto Us our *Lawful Liberties and Properties*, under a mild and well-constituted Government; when almost all other Nations upon Earth, are subject to Arbitrary and illegal Dominion; which is That Form of Government, wherewith God threatned to punish the *Israelites* for their Rebellion against him, when he declared unto them by the Prophet *Samuel* the *Manner of the King that should reign over them*: Our Thankfulness for the continuance of such a Blessing, can by no other way be so properly expressed, as by making it our chief Care to *use* that Liberty which we so justly boast of, and which we have thought worth the defending almost with infinite Blood and Treasure, *so* as not to *abuse* it to Licentiousness and Wantonness: To *use* our Liberty *so*, as not to run into the contrary extreme of Lawlessness and Confusion; To *use* it *so*, as not to break through the Obligations of regular Government and legal Restraints.

*Lastly*, If God has crowned all our other Blessings, with that which is the Security and Preservation of them all; a constant Series of unparallel'd *Successes*, and *Victories* beyond Example great and complete, against the Potentest Enemy that ever yet attempted to enslave the World;

Serm.  
V.

1 Sam.  
viii, 9.

Serm. World; *What shall we render unto the*

V. *Lord for These his Benefits,* and what  
 Returns shall we make him for such a  
 Blessing as This? The Answer to this Que-  
 stion, is of great importance; And the se-  
 rious Consideration of it, is That without  
 which our Religious Assemblies would be  
 but mere Hypocrisie, and our Prayers no  
 better than a mocking of God.

1<sup>st</sup> Therefore, if we will make wor-  
 thy Returns to God, for these his Benefits,  
 in giving us such Victories and Success;  
 we must in the first place be careful to make  
 ourselves truly sensible, from *what Hand*  
 these Blessings do *really come*. We must be  
 fully perswaded, that 'tis *God* that gives  
 Victory in the Day of Battle, and that  
 Success is owing to the Protection of the  
 Almighty; that 'tis He that *breaketh the*  
*Bow, and knappeth the Spear in sunder,*  
*and burneth the Chariots in the Fire.*  
 That which is apt to deceive Men in this  
 Matter, is their observing things to depend  
 upon *Second Causes*, and to be brought  
 about by the Operation of *Natural A-*  
*gents*. But What are *Second Causes*, and  
 What are *Natural Agents*, but mere *In-*  
*struments* in the Hand of him who *ruleth*  
*over All?* All other things, excepting  
*Men* only who are Free Agents, have no  
 pretense to be esteemed *Causes* in Any  
 Sense

Sense at all; but are meerly as *Instru-* Serna.  
*ments* in the Hand of the Workman. V.

And by these things, the Counsels and Designs even of *Men* themselves, of the wisest Men and of the strongest Forces, are perpetually over-ruled to quite different Events, than They intended or could possibly foresee. So that the Issues of all great Actions, and the main Turns of all worldly Affairs, depend intirely upon such Accidents, as are wholly in the Hand of God to direct. Which Accidents, tho' they be indeed what we vulgarly call *Natural Causes*, yet this is really nothing else but an impropriety of Speech; to call That a *Cause*, which, being Unintelligent, is in Truth nothing more than an *Instrument* in the Hand of him who is truly the efficient Cause. And this is evidently the Case, in all Unintelligent Natural Agents. Whatever *They* seem to effect, is not in reality done by *Them*, but by the *Providence of God*. That the Sun *runs* its Course *every Day*, is no less strictly and properly the Hand of God, than that it *stood* still *one Day*: Nor is there any other Ground, why the *One* is by all men readily ascribed to God, and *the other* they vulgarly fancy is done naturally without Him; but only This One foolish Reason, that What God does *once*, they see and acknowledge is done by *Him*; but what he does always, they there.



Serm. therefore think 'tis not *He* does it *at all*.

V. The Scripture, (and Reason also,) teaches us more justly, to *acknowledge God in all our Ways*; and to be sensible who it is, that, being the Author and Director of Nature, and of all those Accidents which we can neither foresee nor prevent, does thereby dispose and order, as he pleases, the Events of all Humane Affairs. *There are many Devices in Mans Heart; but the Counsel of the Lord, That shall stand,* Prov. xix, 21.

2dly. We must not only in a meer *Speculative* manner, be convinced that 'tis the Hand of God which bringeth about all great Events, and crowns us with Victory and Success; but we must so consider it and meditate upon it in a *Practical* manner, as to be truly Thankful to him for the Advantages we reap thereby. The *Jews* in *Moses's* time *knew* very well *who* it was, that *made them ride on the high places of the Earth, and-----to suck Honey out of the Rock, and Oyl out of the flinty Rock*; *who* it was, that *led them in the Wilderness like Sheep, and kept them as the Apple of his Eye*; that *suffered no Man to do them wrong, but reproved even Kings for their sake*. Yet even of these very Persons, who *knew* all these things so perfectly, and had seen them

them with their own Eyes; did that holy Man complain; *Deut. xxxii, 15*, that *Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked*; that he forsook the God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his Salvation. King *Hezekiah*, knew very well who it was that gave him a Sign, and recovered him when he was sick unto Death, and delivered him out of the hand of the King of *Babylon* by a Miracle: Yet even of Him, the Scripture complains, that he rendered not again, according to the Benefit done unto him; for his Heart was lifted up; therefore there was Wrath upon him, and upon *Judah* and *Jerusalem*. Even so *We* also, how well soever we apprehend in a *Metaphysical* and *Speculative* manner, that God is the Disposer of the Events of all Human Affairs; yet What are we the better, if it does not affect us *Morally*, in filling our Hearts with *Gratitude*, and our Mouths with *Praises*, and our Lives with Acts of *Obedience* to him, after all the great Things that he has done for us? This is the only Return, that frail and dependent Creatures are capable of making, to the supreme Lord and Governour of all things.

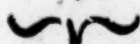
2 Chron.  
xxxii, 25.

*For our Goodness extendeth not to Him; neither can Man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise, may be profitable unto him.*

Job xxii, 2.

Serm.

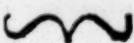
V.



*himself.* But *Thankful* and *Obedient* to him, we *can* be; and most inexcusable and base is our Ingratitude, if his Mercies do not so affect us. Yet most prone is our corrupt Nature, to become thus forgetful of our supreme Benefactor: And the very *Frequency* of great and unexpected Blessings, is itself, to careless and profane Persons, an occasion of neglecting those things as common, which, if they had more rarely happened, would have been more carefully observed. In the Course of this great and bloody War, almost *every Campaign* has afforded as much matter of Thanksgiving, as at other times the whole Series even of a successful War has been used to furnish. And for this very reason, because we have been obliged to return Thanks *so often*, unthinking and careless persons have little or no Disposition to be truly Thankful and Devout *at all*. The proper Remedy against this Evil; is to consider seriously and distinctly, what it is that we have hitherto been delivered from, by those Successes, for which we have so often and with so much reason been commanded to return publick Thanks. The War, wherein we are now engaged, seems to be the last Struggle for the *Two* things, which alone are valuable in human Life; *Liberty*, and *Re-*



*Religion*: In opposition to *arbitrary Power*, which destroys all Property; and in opposition to *humane Authority and Infallibility sitting in the Seat of God*, which is totally inconsistent with all true Religion. Had it pleased God to permit our Enemies to have been as successful against *Us*, as we have hitherto been victorious over *Them*; we had long since been Slaves, deprived of all legal Right to our temporal Possessions; and, for our Religion, had been worshipping Stocks and Stones, and Souls of Men departed, instead of *Him that made the Heavens* Rev. xiv, *and the Earth and the Sea, and all*<sup>7</sup> *things that are therein*. Or, had Providence permitted us to have been deluded, with the pretenses of a false and deceitful *Peace*; the Effects of such an ill-grounded and insecure Agreement, might possibly have been much more fatal, than the continuance even of the bloodiest and most expensive *War*. And the growing Mischiefs of one disadvantageous *Treaty*, might have been more difficult to retrieve, than the transient Miseries even of many unprosperous and unsuccessful *Campaigns*. For we have to deal with an Enemy, with whom no Peace is to be had longer, than we have Power to enforce it: An Enemy, whose Character

Serm.  
V.

Serm. rafter is exactly given by the Prophet Da-

V. *niel, ch. viii, v. 23; A King of fierce countenance,-----who shall destroy wonderfully;-----and through his policy also he shall cause Craft to prosper,---and he shall magnifie himself in his Heart; and by Peace shall he destroy many.*

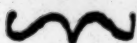
3dly. That our Thanksgiving may become truly acceptable; it must be *accompanied* with such *Circumstances*, and *followed* with such *Behaviour*, as may show the *Words* of our *Mouths* to be real Expressions of the *Thoughts* of our *Hearts*, and that our Praises proceed not *out of feigned Lips*. Our Joy must express itself, not in Rioting and Drunkennels, not in Frenzy and Debauchery; but in Praises and Thanksgivings accompanied with Sobriety and Purity, with Modesty and Humility; such as becomes those who mean to honour God with Piety and sincere Devotion in the practise of that Religion, the Preservation of which from being over-run with the Tyranny and Superstition of Popery, is one of the principal Grounds of our rejoicing for that Success wherewith God has hitherto blessed us. For it becomes us *Christians* to rejoice, not in *Ravage* and *Bloodshed*, not in the *Misery* and *Destruction* even of our Enemies themselves: It becomes us

to rejoice, not upon the Increase of our *Power* for *Dominion's* Sake; not upon the enlarging our *Territories*, and aggrandizing the *Honour* of our *Arms*; but in being enabled to rescue the oppress'd *Liberties* of Nations; to restore the common *Rights* of Human Nature; and to secure That *Freedom of Religion*, in the denying of which consists the very Essence of *Antichristian* Iniquity. *All* Nations, after their Fashion, return their Thanks to the Almighty, for Victory and Success over their Enemies; And the greatest Tyrants and Oppressors of Mankind, pretend to praise God, whenever their Arms, by the Permission of Providence, and for the Punishment of the World, prevail over the Weakness of their neighbouring Nations: But These their *Thanksgivings* are *Profaneness*; And to presume to offer Praises to God, for the Increase of *Power* for Power's sake, and for the setting up *Arbitrary* and *Tyrannical Dominion*, is no better than affronting of God, and making a mockery of Religion. *Christians* are to desire, and to rejoice at the obtaining such Victories only, as tend to establish the *Rights* and *Properties* of Mankind, and the common *Liberties* of Nations: And our *Joy* must express itself in such manner, and be attended



Serm.

V.

James  
iii, 17.

tended with such consequent Behaviour as is becoming the Purity of the Gospel of Christ. For, as the *Wisdom* which is from above, so the *Joy* also of those who are possess'd of that *Wisdom*, is *first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be intreated, full of Mercy and good Fruits*. It becomes us to rejoice for Success in *War* for no other Reason, but because 'tis the necessary and only Means of arriving at a safe and secure *Peace*. With which Blessing when it shall please God to complete and crown all our past Successes; then will it highly behove us to approve our selves indeed the *Children of Peace*, by laying aside all those unchristian *Divisions and Animosities* among our selves, which are kept up by mutual Accusations, full (as we may reasonably hope) of more *Uncharitableness* than *Truth*. The means of causing all which to be forgotten, is first to *unite* heartily in pursuing the Things wherein we all agree; and then to wait with *Charity* in those wherein we differ, till even in *these* also *God shall reveal the Truth unto us*. Let us consider, that *Force and Violence*, without regard to Right and Equity, are the Means by which our *Adversaries* propagate their *Power*, and (as they are pleas'd to call it) their *Religion* also: For which

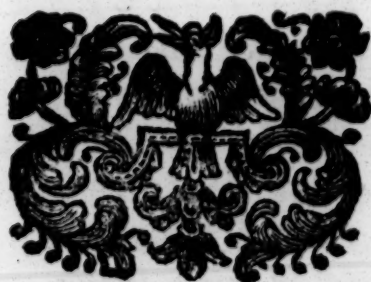
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Reason principally, their *Power* is a *Publick Enemy* to Mankind, and their *Religion* properly *Antichristian*. But *We* profess to make *War*, not for the Sake of *Conquest*, but only to obtain to our selves a secure *Peace*. And our *Religion* teaches us, as to *desire* the *publick*, so to *maintain* (as far as possible) *private* Peace also among ourselves; by mutual Love, Charity and Good-Will; as becomes those who profess the *Gospel of Peace*.

Serm.  
V.

Let us therefore endeavour to *understand* rightly, the full *Nature and Design* of the Religion we *profess*. Which consists mainly in these *Two* Things. 1<sup>st</sup>, That the *Scripture* (as I before observ'd) is the *only Rule* of our *Faith*. Which, if duly attended to, would speedily put an End to all *Differences* and *Contentions*, among those who consider what they mean when they make *that Profession*. And 2<sup>dly</sup>, That the *Commandments of God* are infinitely of more Importance, than any *speculative Notions* or *Opinions* of Men. Which thing, if seriously consider'd, would as effectually regulate our *Practise* in the Conduct of *Life*, as the adhering steadfastly to the only true Rule of *Faith*, would at once cut off all *Disputes* in the Matter of our *Belief*. Our *Lusts* and *Follies*, our *Debauchery* and *Profaneness*, our

Serm. unreasonable and unchristian *Uncharitableness* and *Divisions* among *our selves*; are worse and more dangerous *Enemies*, than those we fight with *abroad*. And unless we speedily reform these Abuses, and cease to provoke God by the continu'd Corruption of our Manners; the same Divine Providence, which has hitherto wonderiully fought for us against the potentest Monarch that ever yet aim'd at the Empire of the World; can as easily, if he pleases, turn back our Successes speedily to our entire Destruction; and in a Moment bring upon us, after all our Victories, the very same *Event* as would have been the Effect of a continually unsuccessful *War*; at the time when we are just flattering ourselves with the Hopes of being put into secure Possession, of the Blessings of a safe and lasting *Peace*.





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*The Government of Passion.*

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A  
S E R M O N

Preach'd before the

*Q U E E N,*

At St James's Chapel, on *Sunday*  
the 7th of *January*, 1710-11.

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*Publish'd by Her MAJESTIES Special Command.*

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E P H E S. IV, 26.

*Be ye Angry, and Sin not.*

S I N C E in the ordinary Conduct  
of Human Life, and in the *Common*  
*Affairs* of the World, *Natural*  
*Wisdom* teaches us, that the only sure and  
effectual means of avoiding *great* Evils,  
is the preventing of *small* ones; and that  
the *Beginnings* of Mischief are much more  
easily prevented, than the *Progress* of  
them

Serm. . .  
VI.

Serm. them stopped, or the *Consequences* of them  
 VI. remedied :

~~~~~ Since under the improvements of *Philosophy* in the Heathen World, the principal and most useful Precepts given men for the Government of their Passions, was *to watch continually, and guard themselves against the first Emotions* of Passion rising up in opposition to Reason; *to stop the first breaking out of a silent Stream, which by Neglect would swell into an overflowing Torrent; to extinguish the first Spark of a scarce discernable Fire, which by degrees would prevail into a destroying Conflagration :*

Since by the still purer and more refined Precepts of the *Doctrine of Christ*, we are obliged to govern even our very *Thoughts* and *Desires*; to pray against the *Temptations* and *first Occasions* of Sin; to lay the Ax to the Root of the Tree, by *suppressing* all corrupt *Affections*, by *restraining* all inordinate *Appetites*, by *moderating* and keeping even a strict Hand over *innocent Inclinations*; by *plucking out*, if need be, even a *right Eye*, and *cutting off a right Hand* :

Since these things (I say) are so; It may well seem strange, to any one that is not versed in the Jewish manner of speaking, how St *Paul* should come to express him-

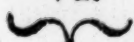
himself after such a sort, as if he intended to indulge men in letting loose the Reins to their Passions, as far as was consistent with Innocency; and thought it safe to permit Men to allow themselves in the gratification of their Anger, provided they did but just keep themselves without the Borders of Sin: *Be ye Angry, and Sin not.* As if the Bounds between what is excusable and criminal, were marked with so distinct a limit, that men might be trusted to discern with Ease, *when* they were at the utmost extent of their lawful Liberty; or that it could be supposed Men had so perfect a Command of themselves, as to be able to stop suddenly at an appointed Mark in a swift Career, and say (when they please) to their Passion, *hitherto shalt thou go, and no further.*

Our Saviour, in his Divine Sermon upon the Mount, makes it in almost every Instance, his peculiar Improvement of Moral Obligations under the Gospel, to warn men against the *Approaches* and *Tendencies* towards those Sins, whereof only the *gross Acts* were forbidden under the Law. *We have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit Adultery: But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a Woman to lust after her, has already committed Adultery with*

Mat. v. 27.

Serm.

VI.



her in his Heart. Ye have heard it has been said by them of old, Thou shalt not forswear thy self; but I say unto you, Swear not at all. Ye have heard it has been said, An Eye for an Eye, and a Tooth for a Tooth: But I say unto you, that ye resist not Evil. Ye have heard it has been said, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour, and hate thine Enemy; But I say unto you, Love your Enemies. And in the Case before us, of Wrath and Anger: Ye have heard, says he, that it has been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill: But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his Brother without a Cause, shall be in danger of the Judgment;---and whosoever shall say, Thou Fool, shall be in danger of Hell-Fire. Nay, in some of the antientest Copies of this Gospel, those Words of Restriction, (without Cause,) whosoever shall be Angry without Cause, are omitted; and the Declaration is made in the most general Terms, Whosoever is Angry with his Brother, shall be in danger of the Judgment: Men being apt enough of themselves, to put in such restrictions as may be equitably presumed; and there being no need, in the Body of the Law itself, to express such excepted Cases or such Limitations, to which in all reason and

equity

equity it may however be supposed the Law cannot extend. This makes it still the more worthy of enquiry, *whence* it might come to pass, that St *Paul* expresses himself upon this Subject in such a manner, as may seem to give some *Indulgence* to such *Degrees* of Passion as are not directly sinful; (*Be ye angry, and Sin not*;) when yet both by Experience and the Reason of Things, and by our Saviour's express Caution in all matters of this Nature, 'tis evident that Passions indulged to the utmost Bounds of Innocency, are much harder to restrain from entring into sinful degrees, than it was to prevent their beginnings or their arising at first.

Now the True Account of this Matter, seems plainly to be this. The Words, *Be ye Angry*, are not a Permission, as they may seem to be when taken alone; but, according to the Nature and Use of the Jewish Language, they are Part of a *Single* Proposition with those that follow. *Be ye Angry, and Sin not*; that is, *Take heed and beware of* sinful *Anger*. *Indulge not Anger*, lest ye fall into *Sin*. Or, *If at any time ye be provoked*, then *take particular Care that ye fall not into Sin*. For such is the Idiom of the Jewish Language; to express That in *Two* distinct Propositions, which ought *so* to be understood,

Serm. stood, as if they were put in *One*. There
 VI. are many other Texts in Scripture, which
 will confirm this Interpretation; And the
 comparing them with this, will reciprocally afford much Light, towards the True Understanding of several of those Passages.

In the Old Testament; *Mal. i; 2, 3. Jacob have I loved, saith God, and Esau have I hated.* The Propositions are not to be understood asunder, but to be taken together as *One*; *Jacob have I loved, more than Esau.* For, God did not intend to express *Hatred* towards *Esau*, but only to love *Jacob* comparatively, with a *great Love*. *Nahum iii, 14, Fortify thy strong holds,---there---shall the Sword cut thee off:* The intention is not to exhort *Nineveh* to fortify herself; but to declare, how much soever she *does* fortify her self, *yet* shall the *Sword* cut her off. And so *Isai viii, 9. Gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in Pieces;* i. e. how much soever ye strengthen your selves, *yet* shall ye be broken. Again; *Ecclus. xxx, 9. Cocker thy Child, and he shall make thee afraid; play with him, and he will bring thee to Heaviness:* The Proposition is but *One*; *If* thou indulge thy Child, he will bring thee to Sorrow. *Jer. vii, 22. I spake Not unto your Fathers, nor commanded*

manded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning Burnt-offerings or Sacrifices; But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my Voice: The two Parts of this Sentence of the Prophet, are not to be taken separately, as if he affirmed that God did *not* require Burnt-offerings *at all*; (for 'tis certain he *did* command them in most *express* words in the Law;) but the whole is to be understood together, that God did not *insist* upon Burnt-offerings *so much*, as upon Obedience to the Commandments of the *Moral Law*. There is a like expression, *Hof. vi, 6*; *I desired Mercy, and Not Sacrifice*: The meaning is not, that God did *not* require Sacrifice; but that he desired Mercy, *rather* than Sacrifice; and (as it follows in the very next Words) *the knowledge of the Lord, more than Burnt-offerings*. And thus also must be understood That passage in *Ezekiel*, chap. xx, 25; *I gave them also statutes that were NOT good, and judgments by which they should not live*: The meaning is *not*, Evil Statutes; God forbid: But Statutes, which *comparatively* were not good; and Judgments which were not *so* profitable, as moral ones, to cause them to live.

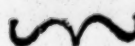
Serm.

VI.

In

Serm.

VI.

 In the *New Testament*, the same manner of expression, agreeable to the nature of the Jewish Language, is likewise frequently used; and it is necessary to be taken notice of, in order to the true understanding of several Passages. *I am not sent*, saith our Saviour himself, discoursing with the Woman of Canaan, *but to the lost Sheep of the House of Israel*; St Mat. xv, 24. His meaning is not absolute, (as might seem from the first part of the Sentence,) that he was *not sent at all* to any others than the Jews only; but that he was not sent so *soon*, so *immediately*, so *principally*; his Mission was not to be made known so *early*, to any other Nation, as to the *lost Sheep of the House of Israel*. For that he *was* also, in process of *Time*, to be a Light to lighten the *Gentiles*, as well as to be the Glory of his People *Israel*, the Scripture of the Prophets expressly enough declared; and our Saviour himself in this very place sufficiently intimates, when immediately after that seeming refusal, yet he effectually granted this Stranger's request, by healing the Infirmary of her Daughter. And in his Instructions to his Disciples, *chap. x, 5*, he speaks with less obscurity; *Go not into the way of the Gentiles;-----but go rather to the lost Sheep of the House of Israel.* Which

Which afterwards was still *more clearly* Serm.
expressed by the Apostles, *Acts* xiii, 46; VI.

It was necessary that the Word of God ~~~~~
should first be spoken to the Jews; but
afterwards to the Gentiles. But, not to
mention any other places, there is one
Expression of St. Paul, of this nature,
more remarkable to the present purpose,
than any other Passage in the whole Scrip-
ture. In the vi. Chapter of his Epistle to
the *Romans*, at the 17th Verse; *God be*
thanked, saith he, *that ye were the Ser-*
vants of Sin: but ye have obeyed from
the Heart That Form of Doctrine, which
was delivered you. God be thanked, that
ye were the *Servants of Sin*: It may
seem a very strange and unusual Expres-
sion, according to the manner of speak-
ing in modern Languages: But in the
Jewish Idiom it was very intelligible,
that the two parts of the Sentence should
be taken as One; *God be thanked*, for
that ye, who once were the *Servants of*
Sin, have since obeyed from the Heart
That Form of Doctrine, which was de-
livered you.

And thus likewise in the Words of the
Text; *Be ye angry, and Sin not.* That
is; *Take heed and beware of sinful An-*
ger; Indulge not Anger, lest ye fall into
Sin; Or, If at any time ye be provoked,
then

Serm. *then take particular care that ye fall not*
 VI. *into Sin.*

It is the same Caution, as in the Government of all *other* Passions or Desires. So *use* the World, as not *abusing* it; So *rejoice*, as though ye *rejoiced not*; So *weep*, as those that *wept not*; So *be angry*, as that ye *Sin not*. The meaning of the Words, being thus explain'd: That which remains, is; 1st, that I endeavour, in a practical manner, to represent unto you, what the *Kind* or *Degree* of that Anger is, which must be charged as Sinful. And 2^{dly}, that I briefly set before you some of the *Mischiefs* and *Inconveniences*, of allowing our Passion to arise to such a sinful Degree.

Before I enter upon which Heads, it may be proper to premise two Things. 1st, that What shall be said concerning the Nature of *Anger* in particular, may with little Variation be easily applied in general to the Government of *all other* Passions whatsoever. So that though the present Subject of my Discourse be *particular*, yet, by serious Meditation, it may without Difficulty be made *universally* useful, towards regulating the Conduct of Humane Life. And 2^{dly}, that Those things which Scholastick Writers upon this Subject, have made burdensom to the

the Memory, and intricate to the Understanding, by numerous Definitions, and more nice than necessary Distinctions; I shall endeavour to reduce under one single Head, that, What to Persons of all *Capacities* is their Duty to *practise*, may, without affording Matter for Dispute or Subtilty, be by all Persons equally *understood*.

I. These things being premised; I proceed *1st* to inquire, what the *Kind* or *Degree* of that Anger is, which must be charged as Sinful. And This will best be understood, by considering briefly what the Nature and Use of our Passions is, and for what Intent they were implanted in us by our All-wise Creator.

Where *Reason* and Understanding are *perfect*; there is no room for any *Passion* or *Commotion*. And therefore in the most perfect Being, there is *no* Passion. In *God*, there is, properly speaking, neither Anger nor Complacency, neither Love nor Hatred, neither Joy nor Sorrow. In Him, there is no such Thing as Desire or Aversion; no such Commotion, as either Hope or Fear. But his Actions are determined always by perfect and unmixed Reason, by eternal and unchangeable Equity; Which, in the Supreme Mind, is an uninterrupted Calmness, like the

Se-

Serm. Serenity of the Highest Heavens. For,
 VI. though the Scripture does indeed represent to *Us* the Divine Actions, as proceeding from Passions like to Ours; yet this is *not* representing them what they are really in *Him*, but only in Condescension to the Weakness of *our* Apprehensions, or with regard to their Effects upon *Us*. And as, in the same Scripture, *Hands* and *Feet* and *Eyes* are figuratively ascribed to Him, who, in reality, without Shape or Figure, is in all places every where alike present; so by the like *Analogy only* it is, that to God are sometimes ascribed *Passions*, for which there is no Place in a Mind where Reason and Understanding are perfect.

On the contrary, where there is *no Reason* nor proper Understanding *at all*; as in Creatures inferiour to *Us*; there, *Passions and Appetites* are the *only* Springs of Action; and by *Them* are *irrational Creatures* naturally and unavoidably directed.

Men, who (like *Beasts*) are formed out of the *Dust of the Earth*, and yet (like *Angels*) made *after the Image of God*; are of a *middle* Nature between these two States, between perfect *Reason* and mere irrational *Appetites*: Being indued with *Appetites and Passions*, to *excite* and stir them

them up to Action, where their bare abstract *Understanding* would leave them too *remiss*; and at the same time indued with *Reason* also, to govern and *restrain* themselves, where *mere Appetites* and *Passions* would hurry them on to things exorbitant and unreasonable. Herein therefore particularly lies the principal Duty of *Man*; in keeping his *Passions* subject to Reason, and in governing his *Appetites* by That *Understanding*, wherewith God has distinguished him from the inferior Creation.

The *Affections* and *Passions* are not in themselves *Evil*, (as some of the Antient Philosophers vainly imagined;) but were implanted in us by the Wise Author of all things, for excellent Ends and very useful Purposes: That We, whose mixt Nature of Body and Spirit, would otherwise have made us too *remiss*, in pursuing the Ends to which bare abstract Reason directed us; might by the *Affections* and *Passions*, under the regulation of Reason, and subservient to it, *i. e.* by reasonable Fears and Hopes, by Love or Hatred, by Anger or Complacency, be pushed on and *excited* to be more earnest and vigorous, more constant and diligent in all those Actions of Life, which Reason *directs*, and the *Affections execute*.

L

But

Serm. But now, when the Passions, instead
VI. of *obeying* Reason, over-rule and govern

it; when they prevail *against* Reason, so as to put Men upon doing things which the Reason of their Minds at the same time forbids; or, (which is much the same thing,) when they become so violent as to abridge Men of their Liberty, and put them *beside* their Reason; so as to leave them no room or time to judge, whether the thing they are doing be reasonable or no; *Then* it is, that the Passions become truly Sinful. And *Man*, who when *Reason* governs him, is the Image of *God*; degenerates, by the Dominion of *Passion*, even below the Nature of a *Beast*. For those inferior Creatures, when they obey their Appetites, follow their *Nature*: But the Nature of *Man*, is to obey a higher Principle, even *Reason* and the *Law of God*; to which, He who is governed by *Passion*, is not Subject, neither indeed can be; and therefore degenerates below his proper Nature. Which is a Folly, whereof inferiour Beings are not guilty.

From hence it becomes very evident, (which was the *first* thing proposed,) what the *Kind* or *Degree* of that *Anger* is, which must be charged as Sinful: Namely, that it is *Then* such, when it either puts
Men

Men *besides* the Use of their Reason, or upon acting in any sort *contrary* to it. Sermon VI.

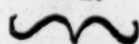
The Rule is *One*, and may without Difficulty be universally understood by *All* Men; But the Application is *infinite*, and must be made by *every One* for his own *Particular*. Every Person knows, when he considers seriously with himself; that his Anger becomes *Then* a sinful Passion, when it is stirred up *without just Cause*, or upon *any Cause* vents itself in *undecent Effects*; when it spoils his Temper by *frequent Returns*, or by its *Violence* exposes him to unseemly *Transports*, or by † its *Continuance* degenerates into Hatred and Malice; when its *Height* is disproportionate to the *Occasion* that raised it, or unbecoming the *Character* of the Person provoked; or the *Circumstances* be in any wise contrary to right Reason and Religion. Which Cases though they are indeed *infinitely various*, and therefore cannot be expressed in any Methodical Direction; yet because the Rule (as was said) is but *One* and unchangeably the same, therefore the Application in Practice is always *Easy*: *Easy* (I mean) *to be understood*, that a Man is *then* always to look

† Let not the Sun go down upon your Wrath: The Words immediately following the Text.

Serm. upon his Passion as Sinful, when it either
 VI. puts him *beside* the Use of his Reason,
 or upon acting any thing *contrary* to it:
 But not always so *Easy* to be *Practised*:
 Because habitual Passions, are very apt to
 surprise Men; and will not be prevented,
 but by a *constant Guard*. Yet, because
 'tis a *necessary Duty*, so to prevent and
 guard against them; therefore in order to
 perswade Men to set about the Practice of
 what is so indispensable and of so great
 importance, 'tis proper that I proceed
 now in the

II. *Second* place, to consider some of
 the *Mischiefs* and *Inconveniencies*, of al-
 lowing our Passions to prevail, in any of
 the forementioned *Kinds* or *Degrees*.

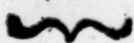
And here we cannot but take notice,
 that even the *Heathen* Moralists them-
 selves, have filled their Discourses with
 Arguments against irregular and disorder-
 ly Passions; drawn from the *Indecency*
 and *Unseemliness*, of the *Thing itself*;
 from the *Shame and Indignity*, of a *rea-
 sonable Creature's* being subject to such
unreasonable Slavery: from the *Uneasi-
 ness* of it, to *Ourselves*; from the *Inju-
 riousness* of it, to *Others*; and from ma-
 ny other Considerations, which prove a
 Man, who is governed by his Passion, to
 be incapable even of true *Philosophy*,
 inca-



incapable of coming up to so much as the Moral Improvements even of a Wise *Hea-then*.

And the *Scripture* itself sometimes makes use of such *Natural* Arguments. From the *Folly* of the *thing itself*, Eccles. vii, 9; *Be not hasty in thy Spirit to be Angry; For Anger resteth in the Bosom of Fools*. Prov. xii, 16; *A Fools Wrath is presently known, but a prudent Man covereth Shame*; and chap. xiv, ver. 17, 29, *He that is slow to Wrath, is of great Understanding; but he that is soon Angry, dealeth Foolishly; and he that is hasty of Spirit, exalteth Folly*. Again; From the *Contempt* it draws upon Men, who are observed to be guilty of this Weakness; Prov. xxv, 28, *He that hath no Rule over his own Spirit, is like a City that is broken down, and without Walls*. From the frequent *Mischiefs* and *Damages* it brings upon them; Prov. xix, 19, *A Man of great Wrath, shall suffer Punishment; For if thou deliver him, yet thou must do it again*: And Job v, 2, *Wrath killeth the foolish Man, and Envy slayeth the silly One*. Also, from the *natural Excellency* of the contrary Practice; Prov. xvi, 32, *He that is slow to Anger, is better than the Migh-*

Serm. *ty; and he that ruleth his Spirit, than*
 VI. *he that taketh a City.*



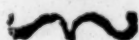
But to *Us Christians*, there are still higher Arguments to convince us of the Mischief of being governed by our Passions; and to perswade us of the Necessity, of restraining them within due Bounds. For *Us*, to indulge our Passions; is to deprive our selves wholly of that Temper, that Frame and Disposition of Mind, which is the peculiar Character and Obligation of a Christian. If a *Philosopher*, if a *Wise Heathen*, upon the common Principles of Reason and Morality; If a *Man*, upon the bare consideration of the Dignity of his *Nature* above the Beasts that perish; is under Obligation to subdue his Appetites and Passions to Reason: How much more is a *Christian* bound, to keep himself still under stricter and more severe restraints?

For when a *Christian* indulges his Passion, let him consider *Who* it is, that acts so unworthily, and behaves himself so unseemly. A Man indued with *Reason* and Understanding: A Man, whose Reason is *improved*, not by *Philosophy* only, but moreover by the Knowledge of the *revealed Will* of God: A Man, for whom *Christ* dyed; to whom *God* has been freely reconciled, and, out
 of

of mere Mercy and undeserved Compassion, vouchsafed to turn away his Anger from him.

Serm.

VI.



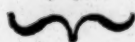
And against *Whom* does this person direct the Violence of his Passion? Against a *Man* like himself; against his *Friend* or his *Brother*, Bone of his Bone, and Flesh of his Flesh; one for *whom* Christ dyed as well as for *himself*, and by his own Blood redeem'd them *Both* from Death.

And *What* is it *for*, that one Christian Man, is fiercely angry against another? Perhaps for a *careless Word*, for an *undesign'd Provocation*, for a *difference in Opinion*; possibly for retaining a *good Conscience*, and not daring to do what the other expects of him; At most, for some slight and trivial *Offence*; for not being able to repay him his Hundred *Pence*, when God has forgiven them Both their Ten Thousand *Talents*.

Not that one Christian may not, in a just and legal manner, *compel* another to do what is right and equitable: Much less, that Superiors should not by their Authority *oblige* Inferiors, to perform the proper Duties of their respective Stations: But that in these, and all other Cases, *Religion and Equity* be the *Ground*; and *Reason*, not *Passion*, the *Measure* of the *Compulsion*.

Serm.

VI.



If any thing in the World could make exorbitant Passion excusable; it should seem to be when *Vice* is the Object of the Displeasure; and Concern for the *Honour of God*, the Cause of the Commotion. Nevertheless, even in *this* Case, our Saviour himself, when he was not only *reviled*, but was reviled also with *Blasphemy* against *God* himself; yet *reviled not again*. And *Michael the Archangel*, when contending with the Devil, yet did not bring against him a railing Accusation, but said, *The Lord rebuke thee*; Jude ix. And the Scripture accordingly directs, that a *Servant of God must not strive, but be gentle unto all Men, apt to teach, patient; In meekness instructing them that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them Repentance to the acknowledging of the Truth*. For the *Wisdom* that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of *Mercy and good Fruits*, St Jam. iii, 17. And St Paul exhorts, Eph. iv, 31, *Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil-speaking be put away from you, with all malice; And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted; forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you*.

There

There is a remarkable History to this purpose in the Book of *Jonah*; where, upon God's repenting to execute his Threatnings upon *Nineveh*, *Jonah* was displeased at it exceedingly, and he was very Angry; and persisted in it, that he did well to be Angry, even unto Death. But God reprov'd him by the similitude of a Gourd, at which *Jonah* was grieved when it perished suddenly; And the Lord said unto him, *Thou hadst pity on the Gourd, which came up in a Night, and perished in a Night; and should not I spare Nineveh, that great City?*

When once a Man, whatever the Occasion be, gives himself up to his *Passion*; he is then out of the Use of his *Reason*, and he can never tell to what degree of *Unreasonableness* he may be pusht on. *An angry Man stirreth up strife, and a furious person will abound in Transgression*, Prov. xxix, 22. As *Cain's* causeless Displeasure against his Brother, increased by degrees beyond limit, till it ended in Murder; so *Passion* let loose even upon the most just *Provocation*, is like a Torrent breaking thro' a Bank; which will hardly be prevented from swelling, till it leads us into Sin. *My beloved, saith St James, let every Man be---slow to Wrath; For the Wrath of Man, (even though it be against what*

Serm. what it *Evil*,) yet *worketh not the right-*
 VII. *teousness of God.*

The *Cause* of such disorderly Passions, is always *Carelesness* and want of *Seriousness*: The *Remedy* is, *Consideration*, *Attention*, and frequent *Examination* of a Man's self; so as to keep a constant Guard and Watchfulness over his Spirit. To be able *perfectly* to cure his Temper, to conquer himself *wholly*, and change his Disposition; is what no One ought to expect in *this* World; nor to be disappointed or discouraged, if he finds even the *moderating* it to be a Work of Difficulty and Time. But to *indeavour* to amend it *daily*, is his indispensable Duty. And he who considers how easily and suddenly he can restrain himself, at the coming in of a *Superiour* whom he reveres among *Men*; must not pretend it impossible for him to govern his Passions, with the Thoughts of the perpetual Presence of *God*.

There have been some, who have alledged in Excuse for themselves, That Passage in Scripture, that the Apostles Themselves were *Men of like Passions with us*, Acts xiv, 15. But the intent of That passage is much misunderstood, through an improper Translation. For the intention of St *Paul* and *Barnabas* speaking in that manner to the Men of *Lystra*, was
 not

not to say that they were Men of *like Passions*, in the Sense we now usually understand the Word; but that they were Men of *like Infirmities*, mortal Men like themselves, subject to *Diseases*, *Casualties* and *Death*; and therefore, not to be worshipped as *Gods*. So *Jam. v, 17*, *Elias was a Man subject to like Passions as we are*: The meaning is not, that he was a *passionate*, but that he was a *mortal* Man like one of us, and yet interceded effectually with God. But if the meaning was literal, that the Apostles and Prophets had the same *Passions* with *Us*, (as undoubtedly they naturally had,) yet This is no excuse for *Us*, unless, like *Them*, we govern them also by the rules of Reason and Religion. *Be ye Angry, and Sin not.*

Serm.
VI.

Now unto the only Wise God, &c.



A S E R.

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd in the

Parish-Church of St *James's West-*
minster, Decem. 16, 1720. be-
ing the Day of *Fasting* and *Hu-*
miliation, for beseeching God
to preserve us from the *Plague.*

ISAIAH XXVI, 9, latter part.

When thy Judgments are in the Earth,
the Inhabitants of the World will
learn Righteousness.

Serm.
VII.

BESIDES the general Evidences of
the Being and Providence of God,
which appear in the Fabrick of the
Universe, in the Contrivance and wise
Disposition of all the Works of Nature,
and in the Great Providential Events which
to the several Nations of the Earth declare
in some degree his Government over Man-
kind: I say, Besides these *general* Evi-
dences of Providence, the Scripture has
moreover given us a *particular* and stand-
ing Example of it, in the History of the
Jew-

Jewish Nation. *That People*, in a *singular* manner, did God deliver out of the Egyptian Bondage, by Signs and Wonders and Mighty Works. *Them* did he lead through the Wilderness like a Flock of Sheep, and with an out-stretched Arm brought them through innumerable Dangers to the Borders of his Promised Land. Before *Them* did he drive out many Potent People, and planted Them in the room of those idolatrous Nations. Upon *Them*, when they corrupted themselves and departed from his Ways, did he frequently inflict very severe Judgments, by way of exemplary Correction, raising them up new Enemies round about them: And when they returned unto him again, he forgave their misdeeds, and destroyed them not, but delivered them again out of the hands of their Enemies. The *Effects* these various dispensations of Providence had upon *particular Persons* among That people, were very different, according to the Temper and Disposition of the Persons. Those of them, who were very corrupt; who loved the idolatrous Rites of the Nations that surrounded them, and the Debaucheries that attended those idolatrous Practises; became more and more corrupt in the times of *Prosperity*, and in the days of *Adversity* they har-

Serm.
VII.

Serm. hardened their Hearts against God. When

VII. *the Wrath of God came upon them, and slew the wealthiest of them, and smote down the chosen men that were in Israel: For all This they sinned yet more, and believed not his wondrous Works, Pſal. lxxviii, 32. And when God worked for them miraculous Deliverances, ſtill they kept not the Covenant of God, and would not walk in his Law: But forgot what he had done, and the wonderful Works that he had ſhewed for them, Ver. 12. The mighty Signs and Wonders they continually ſaw, grew familiar unto them; and by degrees made no more impreſſion upon them, than the Works of Nature, which are indeed continual Miracles, make Now upon Atheiſtical and Profane Minds. But Others amongſt them, obſerved the Works of God, and the Diſpenſations of his Providence, and laid up all theſe things in their Minds; and were influenced thereby to obey his Commandments, and to ſerve him with an upright Heart. And Some, who in the days of Proſperity forgot themſelves, and were carried away with the Stream of a degenerate and corrupt World; yet, when the Judgments of God appeared, their Heart was tender, and their Conſcience ſmote them, and they returned and repented*

pented of their Evil ways, and amended their Lives, and gave glory to God who ruleth overall. Of *This* kind, were the persons whom the prophet introduces in this Chapter, and in the words of the Text, making their just acknowledgements to God. *Ver. 5, He bringeth down them that dwell on High; the lofty city he layeth it low, even to the ground, he bringeth it even to the dust.-----In the way of thy Judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee; the Desire of our Soul is to thy Name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my Soul have I desired thee in the Night, yea, with my Spirit within me will I seek thee early. For when thy Judgments are in the Earth, the Inhabitants of the World will learn Righteousness.*

Serm.
VII.

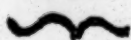
The *Doctrinal Proposition* plainly contained in the words, and which will therefore be the Subject of the following Discourse, is This: That the Design and the Proper Effect of the Judgments of God in This World, is to awaken Sinners, and to bring them by Repentance to the Practise of Righteousness. *When thy Judgments are in the Earth, the Inhabitants of the World will learn Righteousness.*

Righteousness is the Practise of that which is in itself Right and Fit to be done.

And

Serm.

VII.



And, were there no Rewards or Punishments annexed either by God or Man, other than what essentially arise from the Good or Evil Actions themselves; yet That which is Right, would still always be reasonable to be done; and the nature of Wickedness would be still always what it is. Upon This ground it is, that *God*, who is infinitely above all Hope or Fear; to whose Happiness nothing can be added, and nothing diminished from it; yet essentially loves Righteousness and Truth, and steadily and unalterably chooses always to do what is Just and Good. *Inferiour* rational Beings, *so far* as they are influenced by *Reason*, do the same; and see, and esteem, and judge of things, as they really are. But *all finite Beings* are, in their several Proportions and degrees, *fallible*. And the Reason which is in *Men*, is Weak; liable to be darkened by *Ignorance*, to be blinded by *Prejudices*, to be seduced by *Appetites*, to be overruled by *Passions* and unreasonable *Affections*. These are the Springs of Wickedness among Men. To prevent the ill Effects whereof, God has been pleased to *add Weight* on the side of Virtue and Righteousness, by the Sanction of *Rewards* and *Punishments*. The *Rewards* which God has annexed to the Practise of Vir-

Virtue, either in This life or the next, are of such a Nature; that the having *Regard to those Rewards*, does not destroy the intrinsick Excellency of Virtue, or make the Practise of it at all *mercenary*; Because, the Idea of God being the Notion of a Being infinitely Holy, Righteous and Good; the Love of *Him*, and the Desire of continuing in *His Favour* and of being *Blessed* by *Him*, is either in effect the same thing, or at least is coincident with, the Love of Virtue and Goodness itself. *Punishments* likewise, when considered as coming from *God*, are of such a Nature, that Good Actions arising from the *Fear* of *His* Displeasure, do not lose the nature of *True Virtue*; Because, God being infinitely removed from all possibility of Errour, Arbitrariness, or Any Evil disposition whatsoever; men cannot possibly by the Fear or Sense of *His* Anger, be excited or moved to do Any action, but what at the same time they must of necessity be convinced in their Own minds, is Fit and Right and Reasonable for them to do. And Punishments inflicted by *Men*; were they always faithfully and righteously applied, that is, were they never, except in cases of Necessary *Self-Defence*, made use of to any other purpose, than, upon the Foundation of the

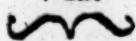
Serm.
VII.

Serm. acknowledged Difference between Good
 VII. and Evil, to *compel* men to do what
 they themselves well know is their *Du-
 ty* to do ; Were This (I say) constant-
 ly the Case, Punishment from *Men* would
 then be of the same Nature, and have
 proportionably the same Effect, as Punish-
 ment from the Hand of *Providence*. But
 the Errours and Passions of Mankind, ha-
 ving too frequently brought great Confusi-
 on into *Their* manner of dealing with each
 other ; the right Use therefore and Ap-
 plication of mens *Hopes* and *Fears* to the
 Purposes of Religion, is to turn them to-
 wards their most proper Object, the *Favour*
 or *Displeasure* of *God*. Now *Fear* being
 the *stronger* and more powerful Affection,
 than Hope ; hence the *Judgments* of God,
 either *seen* or *felt*, either inflicted upon
ourselves, or observed on *Others*, are apt
 to work upon men more effectually to
 bring them to Repentance, than the Ob-
 servation of numerous Instances of the
 Divine Mercy and Goodness. In the words
 immediately following my Text, and as
 a confirmation of the Truth of the Pro-
 position therein contained, that *When*
God's JUDGMENTS are in the
Earth the Inhabitants of the World will
learn Righteousness : In confirmation of
 This Truth, *Let FAVOUR* (says the
 Pro-

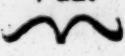
Prophet) *be shown to the Wicked, yet will he not learn Righteousness ; in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the Majesty of the Lord : Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see ; but they SHALL see, and be ashamed :* The Terrours of the Lord will force them to see, and *they Shall be ashamed.* The *Greatest* of all the *Temporal* Terrours of the Lord, is *Death* : Death, which puts an End to all Worldly Considerations, and consigns men over to an unalterable Eternity. When *This* Messenger of the Divine Judicature apparently approaches ; there is no man so void of Sense, as not to begin *Then at least* to be seriously solicitous, what the Event of That Judgment will be, to which he perceives himself going without delay. The *reason* why he should be thus solicitous, is the same at all *other* times. For, near or far off, still Death is equally certain ; *and after That, the Judgment.* And how distant soever Death may at any time seem to be from any particular person, yet, even at that *greatest* seeming distance, it *must of necessity* be very near, it *may* be nearer than can be conceived. But men are careless and stupid ; And the Heat of Passions corrupts their Sense, the Deceitfulness of Riches blinds their Eyes, the

Serm.

VII.



Pleasures of Life steal from them their Understandings; and they willingly suffer the thinnest Mist to hide from them the clearest Light, and the meanest Trifle to divert them from the Thoughts of their Eternal Interest. This is the Lethargy, which, in time of Health and Prosperity, is apt to *stifle* the general Notices which God has given men of Himself in the standing Use both of Reason and Revelation. To awaken men therefore from this state of insensibility, God is pleased *sometimes* to *strengthen* these *general* Notices, by more *particular* and more *immediately affecting* Warnings; by *Threatnings* of impending Judgments upon *Ourselves*, or by *Examples* of his inflicting them upon *Others*. By These, he excites mens consideration and attention, quells the eagerness of ungoverned Passions, and lays open to them the Folly of Ambition and Covetousness. By These, as 'tis elegantly expressed in the Book of *Job*, *ch. xxxiii, 16*; by These *he openeth the Ears of Men, and sealeth their instruction*; *That he may withdraw Man from his Purpose, and hide pride from Man*. And *ch. xxxvi, 8*, *If they be bound in Fetters, and held in cords of affliction; then God sheweth them their work, and their transgression, that they have*

have exceeded: He openeth also their Sermon.
Ear to discipline, and commandeth that VII.
they return from their iniquity. All 

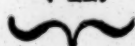
Temporal Judgments therefore whatsoever, are properly of a medicinal Nature, and mercifully intended for our Benefit: All of them without exception, for the Benefit of such as shall take Warning from them in *Others*; and All Those of them which are short of Death, for the Benefit even of the *persons Themselves* on whom they fall. *It is good for me,* says the Psalmist, *that I have been afflicted:* For, *before I was afflicted, I went astray; but Now I have learnt thy Precepts.* The gentle Admonitions of Afflictions sent upon *particular* persons, are the *still Voice* of the Divine Patience, calling Sinners to Repentance: And the severest Calamities even of *publick* and *national* Desolations, Fire and Sword, Dearth and Famines, Plagues and Pestilences, are yet of the *same* nature; being the *louder Calls*, and as it were the *Thunder* of the Almighty's Threatnings, *necessary* sometimes, and even *These* not always sufficient, to rowse up the Senses of a hard and stupid, of a vitious and debauched World. 'Tis *No pleasure* to the Almighty, to grieve the children of Men: And 'tis with the Highest Eloquence of

Serm. *affectionate* expressions, that the Scrip-
 VII. ture constantly sets forth to us, how *un-*
 ~~~~~ *willing* God is to execute his severer  
 Threatnings, how *ready* always to re-  
 move his Judgments upon mens true  
 Repentance, and how he *searches* as it  
 were for *every* argument, and *every* Mo-  
 tive of Compassion: *Shall I not spare*  
*Niniveh, that Great City, wherein are*  
*more than sixscore thousand persons, that*  
*know not their right hand from their*  
*left?* Nay, *shall I not spare Sodom,* does  
 the Scripture represent him saying within  
 himself; shall I not spare it for the sake  
 of *Ten Righteous*, if so many can be  
 found therein? But that the *severest* of  
 the divine *Judgments*, are sometimes  
*absolutely Necessary*; and that the cor-  
 ruption of the World, were it to be al-  
 ways in a *continued* and *uninterrupted*  
*Prosperity*, would be *altogether intolerable*;  
 is apparent from hence, that even  
*these Judgments themselves, seen* inflict-  
 ed upon *Others*, nay even *felt* inflicted  
 upon mens *selves*, even *These* very fre-  
 quently prove *ineffectual*. How often,  
 when we see Great Calamities befall our  
 Neighbours; instead of being warned  
 thereby to amend our *own* Lives, do we  
 turn it only into an occasion of Uncha-  
 ritableness in censuring *Others*! Which  
 Spi-

Spirit, is very affectionately reproved by our Saviour, *Luke xiii, 2, Suppose ye that these Galileans, whose Blood Pilate had mingled with their Sacrifices, were Sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, nay; but except ye repent, ye shall All likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the Tower in Siloam fell, and slew them; think ye that they were Sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, nay; but except ye repent, ye shall All likewise perish.* Nay, how frequently do the severest of God's Judgments inflicted upon a Nation or People; the last and loudest Call to Repentance, after which there remains no Remedy against final excision; how often do *These* prove ineffectual, to awaken even *Those* very persons upon whom they are inflicted; and leave them in an incorrigible impenitency, hardened to destruction! Thus of King *Abaz* we find it recorded, *2 Chr. xxviii, 22, that in the time of his Distress, he trespassed yet more against the Lord: This is That King Abaz.* And of the whole people of *Israel*, in a most eloquent complaint by the Prophet *Amos*, ch. iv, 6; *I have given you want of bread in all your Cities;----- I have smitten you with Blasting and Mildew,*

Serm.

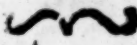
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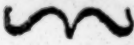


when your Gardens and your Vineyards  
 the Palmer-worm devoured ; yet have  
 ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.  
 I have sent among you the Pestilence  
 after the manner of Egypt, and your  
 young men have I slain with the Sword ;  
 yet have ye not returned unto Me, saith  
 the Lord. I have overthrown some of  
 you, as God overthrew Sodom and Go-  
 morrha, and ye were as a Firebrand  
 pluckt out of the Burning ; yet have ye  
 not returned unto Me, saith the Lord.  
 In like manner in the New Testament,  
 speaking of the Punishment of the Na-  
 tions in the latter days, which call them-  
 selves Christians ; *Rev. ix, 20, 21, The rest  
 of the men which were not killed by  
 these Plagues, yet repented not --- of their  
 Murders, nor of their Sorceries, nor of  
 their Fornication, nor of their Thefts :*  
 Of their Sorceries ; that is, of all their su-  
 perstitious Methods of making men fancy  
 themselves to be religious, by what Others  
 can do for or To them, or by what They  
 can do for themselves, without the Pra-  
 ctise of Righteousness and true Virtue.  
 And *Ch. xvi, 9, Men were scorched with  
 great Heat, and blasphemed the Name  
 of God who hath Power over these  
 plagues ; And they repented not, to give  
 him glory ;--- But blasphemed the God of*  
 Hea-

Supple-  
 ment.



Heaven, because of their Pains,----and Sermon.  
repented not of their Deeds. In This VII.  
Passage, (men repented not, to give him   
Glory;) 'tis worthy of Observation, by the  
way, *Wherein* consists the true and Scrip-  
ture-Notion of the *Glory of God*. It con-  
sists, in the Obedience of the rational and  
moral World to the Laws of his King-  
dom. That is, it consists in reasonable  
Creatures living, (under a due and constant  
Sense of the Divine Government,) ac-  
cording to the Rules of Reason, of ever-  
lasting Righteousness, Goodness and  
Truth. And *Sinners* have no other pos-  
sible way of *giving Glory to God*, but  
by repenting of their evil Deeds; that is,  
amending their Lives, obeying *the Ever-*  
*lasting Gospel*, and forsaking those Vices  
which are opposite to God's Kingdom of  
Virtue and Righteousness. Which Obser-  
vation may be of good Use, for preventing  
many wrong Notions concerning the Na-  
ture of true Religion, and of the *Glory of*  
*God*. But to proceed. The *Reason why*  
the Judgments, the severest and most awa-  
kening Judgments of God, even Those  
which cannot fail to convince men of the  
Transitoriness, and Uncertainty, and Vani-  
ty of every thing here below; do yet  
nevertheless very often prove *ineffectual*  
to cause Sinners *Thus to give Glory to*  
*God*, by bringing them to true Repen-  
tance;

Serm. VII.  tance; The Reason (I say) why even *These* Judgments often fail of This Effect, is a confused, uncertain, inattentive sort of Infidelity; which, ascribing all Calamities to *second* Causes, and lamenting them only as unavoidable *Natural* Disasters, looks not up to the Hand of the *First* Cause, which steers and directs the whole Course of Nature. *Wars* and *Desolations*, we see, arise from the Passions of Men. *Famines*, are owing to Accidents of Wind and Weather. *Plagues* and *Pestilences*, those great destroying Angels possibly *are*, or however *may be imagined to be*, Vapours and Steams out of the Earth. And, because the Grounds of these things appear in *Nature*; therefore Weak and Foolish Men, intent upon the *Weapon* only, and not upon *Him who strikes* with it, regard not to give Glory to the *God* of Nature. Whereas in Truth and reality, *NATURE* is nothing but an empty Word; And the *Course of Nature* (as 'tis vulgarly called,) excepting only the Operations of Free Agents, is merely an *Abstract Notion* or Expression of the *regularity* of *His* Operations, who made and governs all things. Even the Counsels and Designs of *Men*, are, by Incidents unforeseen to *Them*, perpetually over-ruled to quite different Events, than *They* intended or could possibly imagine.

gine. But as to *UNINTELLIGENT* Sermon.  
*Natural Causes*; whatever *They* seem to VII.  
effect, is not in reality done by *Them* at  
all, but by the Providence of God. That  
the *Sun runs* its course *every day*, is no  
less strictly and properly the hand of God,  
than that it *stood still* one day. Nor is  
there any other Reason, why *supernatu-  
ral Miracles* are by all men readily a-  
scribed to God, when the equally Great  
*Miracles of Nature* are vulgarly fancied  
to be done without him; for This (I say)  
there is no other than This One foolish rea-  
son, that What God does *once*, men see and  
acknowledge is done by *Him*; but What  
he does *Always*, they *therefore* think 'tis  
not *He* does it *at all*. The Scripture  
(and Reason also) teaches us more justly,  
to *acknowledge God in All our Ways*.  
That 'tis *He*, who causes *HIS Sun to rise*,  
and *sends us Rain and fruitful Seasons*.  
That 'tis *He*, who (in the Psalmist's ex-  
pression) *maketh the Grass to grow upon  
the Mountains; giving even to the BEAST  
his Food, and to the young Ravens which  
call upon him*. That, without *Him*,  
not a *Sparrow falls to the Ground*, but  
even the very *Hairs of our Head are all  
numbred*. That 'tis *He* alone, who *gives  
us richly all things to injoy*; even all  
*those things*, which, in a vulgar and care-  
less



Serm. less way of speaking, we usually ascribe  
 VII. to *natural and inanimate Causes*. Which  
 very same Causes, whensoever he pleases,  
 he can make to be the Instruments of  
 our *Punishment* as well as of our *Support*. He can (as *Moses* elegantly expresses  
 it;) *make the Heavens over our Heads,*  
*to be Brass; and the Earth under our*  
*Feet, Iron.* He can punish with the *Pe-*  
*stilence that walketh in Darkness, and*  
*with the Sickness that destroyeth at the*  
*Noon-day.* He can scorch with *Drought,*  
 or *drown* with moisture, or *blast* with un-  
 wholsom Winds; in order to destroy with  
*Famine, and make a fruitful Land bar-*  
*ren, for the Wickedness of them that*  
*dwell therein.* Or, without removing  
 the *Blessings themselves* of Nature, he  
 can at any time withdraw the *Benefit* and  
 the *Effects* of them. When God with  
*Rebukes doth chasten Man for Sin, he*  
*maketh his Beauty to consume away, as*  
*it were a Moth fretting a Garment,*  
 Ps. xxxix, 11. So that, besides God's more  
*visible* Judgments upon a Nation or Peo-  
 ple, they will sometimes by a *secret* Curse  
 insensibly decay in their Riches and their  
 Strength. They will, they know not  
 how, be strangely impoverished in the  
 very midst of plenty, and weakned even  
 by the Greatest Successes; While they

see

See not by what silent steps and imperceptible degrees (like *gray hairs* and the infirmities of old age,) Poverty and Weakness steal in upon them. By these various Methods, does the Divine Patience awaken and call men to Repentance. After which, if (in the Prophet's expression) *the people turneth not unto Him that smiteth them, neither will they seek the Lord of Hosts: If, when thou hast stricken them, they have not grieved; when thou hast consumed them, they have refused to receive correction, they have made their Faces harder than a Rock, they have refused to return: there* Then remains nothing, but That severest of all Temporal Threatnings, *Jer. ii, 19, Thine OWN WICKEDNESS shall correct thee, and thy Backslidings shall reprove thee.* Thus did God deal with the *Antient Jews*, *Pf. lxxxix, 11, My people would not hearken unto my Voice, and Israel would not obey me; So I gave them up unto their own hearts Lusts, and let them follow their own Imaginations:* And with the same people in our Saviour's time, *Matt. xxiii, 37, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a Hen gather-*  
eth

Serm. *eth her chickens under her Wings, and*  
 VII *ye would not ! Behold, your House is left*  
 ~~~~~ *unto you desolate.*

It cannot be doubted but your Thoughts have already all along prevented me, in *applying* what has been said *unto Ourselves* ; For whose *Admonition* these things are written, and they were intended for *Examples* unto *Us*, upon whom the *Ends of the World* are come. There is no Nation upon Earth, that has had greater Experience of the Divine Goodness, than *We* have had. We have long enjoy'd the inestimable Blessing of a *Free and Legal Government*, while Other Nations have groan'd under the Violence of Arbitrary Oppressions. We have had the Free Use of our *Reason* and of the *Holy Scriptures* allowed us, which under Other Governments, that yet call themselves *Christian*, have, for many Ages together, been persecuted even unto Death. We have enjoy'd all the Plenty and Happiness of *Peace*, even in the midst of the most vigorous and bloody Wars : While the Sword and Fire have consumed round about us, and Other fruitful Countries have been ravaged and destroyed : While *Thousands* have fallen beside us, and *ten thousands* at our right hand, and yet Providence

vidence has protected us, that *it came* Sermon.
not nigh Us: While Want and Famine VII.
spread Desolation among our Neighbours, and Pestilence at a distance threatned still severer Judgments of God. What *Returns* we have made to the Divine Goodness for these *Lengthnings of our Tranquillity*, appears too sadly in That Impiety and Profaneness, That Looseness and Debauchery, That Iniquity and Uncharitableness, That unrighteous and irreligious Spirit of Heat, Violence and Factiousness, which still abounds amongst us. For These things God has at several times visited this Nation, with some sharp Remembrances of his Displeasure; and has at Other times threatned us with very near Approaches, of a more Lasting and Destructive Wrath. The Sword of his destroying Angel, is *at this day* unsheathed before us; and how far his Commission may extend, God only knows. The *only certain* way of deprecating God's Wrath effectually, is to bring forth beforehand those Fruits meet for Repentance, to which All the divine Judgments, that are not finally destructive, are intended to excite us. The *First* thing is, that every *private* person would for himself seriously examine, and amend (as *Solomon* expresses it, in That Solemn Prayer of his,

Serm. his, 1 *Kings* viii, 38,) every man the
 VII. *Plague of his own Heart*; that is,
 ~~~~~ reform his *private* and *personal Faults*,  
 whatever they be. In the *next* place,  
 with regard to the *Publick*: Since God  
 has been pleas'd to continue to us the  
 Knowledge of the *Gospel*, in a more *free*  
 and *unrestrained* Use of the *Scriptures*  
 than most Other Nations injoy; it be-  
 hoves us, (least we provoke God to re-  
*move our candlestick* out of its place,)  
 to take due and constant Care that  
 we bring every thing impartially to  
 the Test of That sacred Rule; and that  
 in our Practise we continually so behave  
 ourselves, as becomes Those who have  
 always before their Eyes the uncorrupted  
 Doctrine and Precepts of Christ. And  
 since in the *Civil Government* likewise,  
 it has hitherto pleas'd God, by Many even  
 miraculous Events, to continue to us our  
 Laws and Liberties; it imports us, (as we  
 would not draw down upon our Heads  
 That greatest of All the temporal Plagues of  
 God, *Arbitrary Power*;) it imports us, e-  
 very man in his Station, to the utmost of  
 his Ability, to support and maintain a Go-  
 vernment so constituted. That the *Peo-  
 ple*, under the uniform and steady Pro-  
 tection of wise and equitable Laws, may  
 serve God quietly and with religious Fear.  
 And

And that the *King* may rejoice in thy *Strength*, O Lord, and be exceeding glad of thy *Salvation*: That thou mayst give him his *Hearts Desire*, and not deny him the *Request* of his *Lips*: That thou mayst prevent him with the *Blessings* of *Goodness*, and make his *Honour Great* in thy *Salvation*, and crown him with *Glory* and great *Worship*: That thou mayst give him a long *Life* here, and a longer and happier hereafter, even for ever and ever.

Serm.  
VII.

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S E R M O N

Preach'd in the

Parish-Church of St *James's Westminster*, Decem. 8, 1721. being the Day of *Fasting and Humiliation*, for beseeching God to preserve us from the *Plague*.  
*Wm*

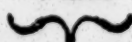
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LUKE XIII; 2, 3.

*And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galileans were Sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*

**T**IS the natural voice and judgment of Reason, in which all men who have Any Sense of God upon their mind, in all Nations and in all Ages, have agreed; that the Miseries and Calamities which befall Mankind, are all of them the *Effects* and *Consequences* of

Serm.  
VIII.



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VIII.

W

*Sin.* Considering the essential Goodness of God, who cannot take pleasure in the needless Afflictions of his Creatures; this notion, in *general*, cannot but be right. And, were there no other State but This; were This world the Whole of God's creation, and took in the whole period of our Being; it could not but be more-over true *in particular*, that the *proportion* of misery which befalls every single person, would be exactly correspondent to his Crimes. But *here*, there comes in a very great variety of *different* considerations. The present state being a Time of *Tryal*, and not of *Retribution*; there hence arise many wise Reasons, why God sometimes permits the greatest of Afflictions to fall upon the Best of men, and sometimes suffers the wickedest of men to go on in an uninterrupted course of Prosperity; and, in the execution of temporal judgments, very frequently involves the righteous in the same calamities which he sends upon the ungodly. The only Use therefore that *can* be made, and which Providence intends *should* be made, of the Divine Judgments here upon Earth; is to convince us of the Evil of Sin in general, to awaken us from a careless and inconsiderate temper, to wean us from



too great a Fondness for the uncertain In-  
joyments of this present Life; and to put  
us continually upon mending *our Own*  
manners, and improving *Ourselves* more  
and more in the practise of virtue; and  
not at all to inable us to judge concern-  
ing *Others*, before the great day of Ac-  
count, what *Their* State and Condition  
is, with regard to the Final Favour or  
Displeasure of God. This is a matter of  
Curiosity, which concerns not *US* to  
know; And every judgment we attempt  
to make concerning it, has, in the pre-  
sent State of things, even a proper and  
natural tendency to deceive us. Every  
*Private* person, in This way of judging,  
whenever he compares himself with O-  
thers; 'tis odds but, according as his na-  
tural Temper be, whether melancholy, or  
presumptuous; he determines either *un-  
charitably* of *Others*, or with unreasona-  
ble *Despondency* of *Himself*; from dispen-  
sations of Providence, which neither to  
*Him* nor *Them* are at all the proper Rule  
of judging in that matter. But *Publick*  
Bodies of Men; Nations, Sects, or Par-  
ties; whenever *They* take upon them to  
judge of each other in This method, they  
hardly ever fail to err on the *Presumptuous*  
Side; and to turn every judgment of

Serm. God, which falls upon men of *Other* de-  
 VIII. nominations, into an Argument of Pride  
 and Favour towards *Themselves*. This  
 is what our Saviour, in the Text, warns  
 us against. *Suppose ye*, says he, *that those*  
*Galileans*, who fell by *Pilate's* cruelty  
 in so extraordinary a manner, as that their  
*own Blood* was mingled with the blood  
 of *their Sacrifices*; suppose ye that these  
 men were *Sinners above all the Gali-*  
*leans, because they suffered such things?*  
*I tell you, Nay; but, except ye repent,*  
*ye shall all likewise perish.* The Persons  
 who told our Lord of this extraordinary  
 calamity, ver. 1; seem to have done it  
 with an expectation of Curiosity, to see  
 what Observations our Lord would make  
 concerning the Behaviour and Circum-  
 stances and State of those men towards  
 God, upon whom this particular misfor-  
 tune fell. But He in *This*, according to  
 his constant method in all *other* cases,  
 disappointed their unprofitable inquisitive-  
 ness; and, instead of satisfying them about  
*Other* mens affairs, turns their question in-  
 to an occasion of making some useful  
 application to *Themselves*: *I tell you,*  
 says he, *except ye repent, ye shall all like-*  
*wise perish.*

In discoursing upon which words, it may be useful for us to observe: 1<sup>st</sup>, our Saviour's *General* manner; That, whenever men proposed to him any curious Question, or related to him any particular Fact or Event, in expectation of hearing his Observations upon it; he constantly turned the matter before him, into an occasion of giving some *practical* instruction, to the persons *themselves* with whom he was conversing. And 2<sup>dly</sup>, The *Particular* doctrine contained in these words: That, though all God's temporal Judgments are inflicted upon account of Sin, yet they are not proportionable to the degrees of mens demerits; And that therefore the proper Use to be made of them, is, never from thence to form any uncharitable Judgment concerning *Others*, but to infer *for Ourselves* the necessity of Repentance.

1<sup>st</sup>. Nothing is more remarkable in the whole history of the Gospel, than our Saviour's *General* Method: That, whenever men proposed to him any curious Question, or related to him any particular Fact or Event, in expectation of hearing his Observations upon it; he con-



Serm. constantly turned the matter before him,  
 VIII, into an occasion of giving some *practical*  
 ~~~~~ instruction, to the persons *themselves*  
 with whom he was conversing. He passes
 no judgment upon those unhappy *Galileans*, whose extraordinary misfortune
 was now reported to him. He makes no
 observation upon the characters of the
 persons, nor gives any hint of the pecu-
 liar reasons for which Providence thus di-
 stinguished them from the Bulk of Sin-
 ners. But (what was of much more Use
 to the persons who made the inquiry, and
 to all Christians in general, for whose
 instruction our Lord's Reply is recorded
 in the Gospel;) he hence takes occasion
 to inculcate upon *All* Sinners, the ne-
 cessity of Repentance and Amendment
 of Life, in order to escape God's final
 Wrath. And This was his constant Me-
 thod, upon all *other* occasions. When
 one asked him *ver. 23d* of This chap-
 ter, *Lord, are there Few that be saved?*
 instead of satisfying the person's curiosity,
 he exhorts both Him that asked the que-
 stion, and as many Others as were pre-
 sent, to take care that *They themselves*
 be found in the number, *whatever* that
Number be. *Strive YE to enter in at the*
strait gate; for Many, I say unto you,
will

will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the Master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to say, Lord, ---we have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our Streets ; He shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence you are ; depart from Me, all ye Workers of iniquity. Again : When his Disciples asked him, *Matt. xviii, 1, Who is the Greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven ?* Instead of naming, according to *their* expectation, some among Themselves, who had conversed with him most intimately here upon Earth ; (which expectation shewed forth itself particularly in the Request of the Mother of Zebedees children, that *One of her Sons* might set on his right hand, and *the Other* on his left in his Kingdom :) Instead of This, I say, he tells them *Which* was the *Only Way*, whereby they could attain to the Kingdom of Heaven *at all*. Setting a little Child in the midst of them, he said ; *Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven ; Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the*

Serm.
VIII.

Serm. *the Kingdom of Heaven.* In like manner, when the Disciples asked him,

VIII.

~~~~~ *Matt. xxiv, 3, When shall these things be? and What shall be the Sign of thy Coming, and of the end of the World?*

ver. 42.

44.

Luke xxi.

44.

the Sum of his Answer is: *Watch YE, and be ye ready; for in such an hour as you think not, the Son of Man cometh.* And, *Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with Surfeiting and Drunkenness and Cares of this life; and so That day come upon you unawares. For as a Snare shall it come on all them, that dwell on the face of the whole Earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things, and to stand before the Son of Man.* And the same Turn that he thus always gave to curious *Questions* put to him, the same he likewise constantly gave to *incidental things* said to him, or to particular *Facts and Events* taken notice of in his presence. When One prefaced a Question he was about to propose to him, with that respectful Title and Mark of Esteem, *Good Master*; he thence takes occasion, even from so seemingly *small* a handle, to instruct the person in that great and prime foundation of all Religion, that



that God, and God only, is perfectly and essentially Good. *Why callest thou Me, Good? There is none Good, but One; that is, God.* Again; When Martha, cumbred with much serving, complained to him, Lord, dost thou not care that my Sister bath left me to serve alone? instead of speaking to her Sister to come and help her, he takes a gentle occasion from her own Complaint, to remind her of a more important piece of Service: *Martha, Martha, Thou art careful and troubled about many things; But One thing is needful; and Mary has chosen that good Part, which shall not be taken from her.* At another time, when one of the company he was discoursing to, desired him to speak to his Brother to divide the inheritance with him; instead of making himself a Judge and Divider between them, he chose rather to take That occasion to preach to them All against Covetousness: *Take heed, and beware of Covetousness; for a man's Life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesses.* In another place, when a person in the Company to whom he was preaching, astonished at the Excellency of his Doctrine, cried out, *Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou*

Serm.  
VIII.Mat. xix,  
17.Luke x,  
40, 42.Luke xii,  
15.

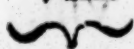
Serm. *thou hast suck'd*, Luke xi, 27; immediately he turns their Thoughts from the admiration of *Himself*, to that which would most effectually be profitable to *Them*: *Yea rather*, says he, *Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it*. Upon another occasion, when his Disciples *prayed him to eat*, John iv, 31: he lets not even That opportunity slip, of reminding them how, to a rational and well-disposed Mind, there is No pleasure so great, as that of doing what is right: *I have meat*, says he, *to eat, that ye know not of;-----My Meat is to do the Will of him that sent me, and to finish his Work*. 'Twould be repeating the *Whole* Gospel, the *Whole* History of our Saviour's life; to mention *All* the Instances of his turning *every Incident* that came before him, into matter of instruction and admonition to those with whom he conversed. When some of the Pharisees advised him to *retire* out of the reach of *Herod*, who, they informed him, had a Design to *kill* him, Luke xiii, 31; Instead of being drawn, as probably *They* expected, by that seeming Friendly and Officious Advice, to enter with them into the *Character* of *Herod* and *his* Government; he, in a very *extra-*

ordinary and yet most *natural* manner, turns his Answer into a *severe Reproof* of *their own* incorrigibleness, and into an occasion of giving them *Warning*, how near the *final Wrath* of God was *impending* upon them: *It cannot be*, says he, *that a Prophet perish out of Jerusalem: O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the Prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her Wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.* In like manner, when his Disciples, as they were going out of the Temple, observed to him, *Master, see what manner of Stones, and what Buildings are here*, Mark xiii, 1; Instead of adding, as they seemed to expect, *his own* Observations concerning the *Sumptuousness* and *Magnificence* of the Building, and the *Grandeur* and *Riches* of the Builder; he on the contrary turns their Thoughts from all *these* considerations, to the View of that *Final Destruction* which God intended to bring upon the Whole Nation, for their continued Perverseness and Disobedience: *Seest thou* (says he to the person who desired him to take Notice of the stateliness of the  
Fa-



Serm.

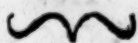
VIII.



Fabrick; *Seest thou these great Buildings? There shall not be left one Stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.* And Thus likewise, in the words of the Text: *When some that were present, told him of the Galileans, whose Blood Pilate had mingled with their Sacrifices; he did not, (as They, who mentioned this matter to him, seemed to expect; he did not) hereupon enter into a Discourse concerning either the Cruelty of Pilate who murdered these Galileans, or his Impiety and Profaneness in murdering them at the Place and Time of God's publick Worship, or concerning the unhappiness of the persons themselves who perished by so particular a misfortune, or concerning the peculiar Reasons why the Divine Providence thought fit to distinguish these particular persons by a singular Judgment: But, instead of All This, he immediately makes the Application to his Auditors then present, and to the persons Themselves who told him of the Fact; warning them of the indispensable Necessity of effectual Repentance and Amendment of Life as the only possible Means by which They Themselves could escape God's final Vengeance. Suppose ye (says he) that these Galileans were Sinners above*

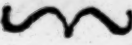
bove all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay; but except ye repent, ye shall All likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the Tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that They were Sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay; but except ye repent, ye shall All likewise perish.

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2dly. Having thus at large set forth to you our Saviour's *General* Method; that, whenever men proposed to him any curious Question, or related to him any particular Fact or Event, in expectation of hearing His Observations upon it; he constantly turned the matter before him, into an occasion of giving some practical Instruction, to the persons *themselves* with whom he was conversing: It remains now in the *second* place, that I proceed to consider the *Particular* doctrine, expressed in the words of the Text; That, though All God's Temporal Judgments are inflicted upon account of Sin, yet they are not proportionable to the degrees of mens Demerits; And that, therefore, the proper Use to be made of them, is never from thence to form any uncharitable Judgment concerning *Others*, but to infer  
for

Serm. *for Ourselves* the Necessity of Repentance.

IX.  That all the Temporal Judgments God at any time inflicts upon Mankind, are on the account of *Sin*, cannot indeed possibly be denied; because 'tis on the account of *Sin*, that men are at all placed in this State of *Misery* and *Mortality*. Had *Sin* never entred into the World, man had never been excluded out of *Paradise*, and from the *Tree of Life*; which was, either literally or figuratively, a Means or an Emblem of Immortality and Happiness. And at last, when *transgression shall be finished*, and *an end made of Sin*; the *Fruit of the Tree of Life* (as the Prophetick language expresses it) shall be again restored, and the *Leaves of the Tree* shall be for the *Healing of the Nations*. To *Sin* therefore *in general*, 'tis evident, all the Miseries of this mortal State are wholly owing. Nevertheless, since this present State is not a State of *Retribution* in *particular*, but only such a State of *Trial* or *Probation*, as God, in consequence of *Sin's* entring into the World, thought fit to appoint men to undergo; a State, in which the righteous and the wicked, without a perpetual miraculous interposition, cannot but be frequently involved in the same Calamities together;



a State, in which the best and most innocent persons very often suffer, even the *most grievously*, by and from the Wicked; a State, wherein God himself sometimes thinks fit, by afflictions of his own more immediate appointing, (by Winds and Storms, by Floods and general Devastations, by Famines, Pestilences, and the like universal Calamities, which fall upon All promiscuously,) to try the Faith and Patience and Resignation of his Servants; and in which State we can never judge with any certainty, whether even those who are the most suddenly cut off, are cut off in Judgment or in Mercy: For these Reasons, whenever we see any extraordinary Calamity befall any particular *Person*, or any *Body* of men, or any one *Nation* in particular; we ought never from thence to form any uncharitable Judgment concerning the State of *Others* with regard to God, but only to infer for *Ourselves* the necessity of Repentance. 'Tis a very natural piece of Pride, in careless and corrupt Minds, to build an opinion of their *own* Goodness, upon the *comparative* Badness of *Others*; and, in judging of this *comparative* Badness of *Others*, to deceive themselves, by founding That Judgment either upon *what O-*

*thers*

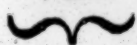
Serm. *thers suffer* at the hand of God, or per-  
 VIII. haps upon *what Faults Others are guilty*  
 of in *one particular manner*, when possibly *They themselves* are in *some Other manner* guilty of the very *same* Offences. Thus, for instance, Christians of the *Reformed Religion* condemn, and very justly, those of the *Church of Rome*, as guilty of the Highest Absurdity and Irreligion, who in a continual Circle look upon themselves as absolved from their Sins, which they *confess* to a *Priest*, and then *return* to their Sins again: And yet among *Protestants* every one is really guilty of the very same Absurdity and Irreligion, who in a continual Circle looks upon himself as absolved from his Sins, which he *confesses* to *God Almighty*, and then *returns* to them again. Thus men are very apt to deceive themselves, in comparing *Other mens Actions* with their *Own*. And so they are apt to do also, in comparing their *Sufferings*. A false and deceitful Heart, (especially in Cases where *Bodies* of men, where *Nations* or *Sects* or *Parties* are concerned,) is very ready to flatter itself with imaginations of being *itself more in Favour* with God, when the severer sorts of the *Divine Judgments* inflicted upon *Others*, fill it with uncharitable

table Suspicions of the *Grounds and Reasons* of those Judgments. In some few particular Cases indeed, where the *Judgment* is the immediate *Consequence* and direct *Effect* of the *Sin*; as, where the *Diseases* are the immediate *Produce* of the *Debauchery*; or where either *single Persons* or *whole Nations* do *themselves* greatly *suffer*, in the *very Attempt* of despoiling *Others* of their manifest *Right*; In these cases there is indeed no uncharitableness, in ascribing the *Judgment* to the *Sin*. But much oftner, and indeed *generally speaking*, it arises wholly from mens *Partiality* towards *themselves*, that they are so ready to throw upon *Others* the Causes of the Judgments wherewith God punishes mankind. Thus of old in the *Heathen Roman Empire*, whenever God was pleased to send among them Plagues or Famines, or Devastations by the incursion of barbarous Nations; the *Christians* immediately, as if *They* were the Causes of the Calamity, were hurried to the Prisons, to the Racks, and to the Wild Beasts. 'Tis not easy for men to see it in *themselves*; But *something* of the *same Spirit* there is in every *wicked man*, when, instead of being moved by the Judgments of God to



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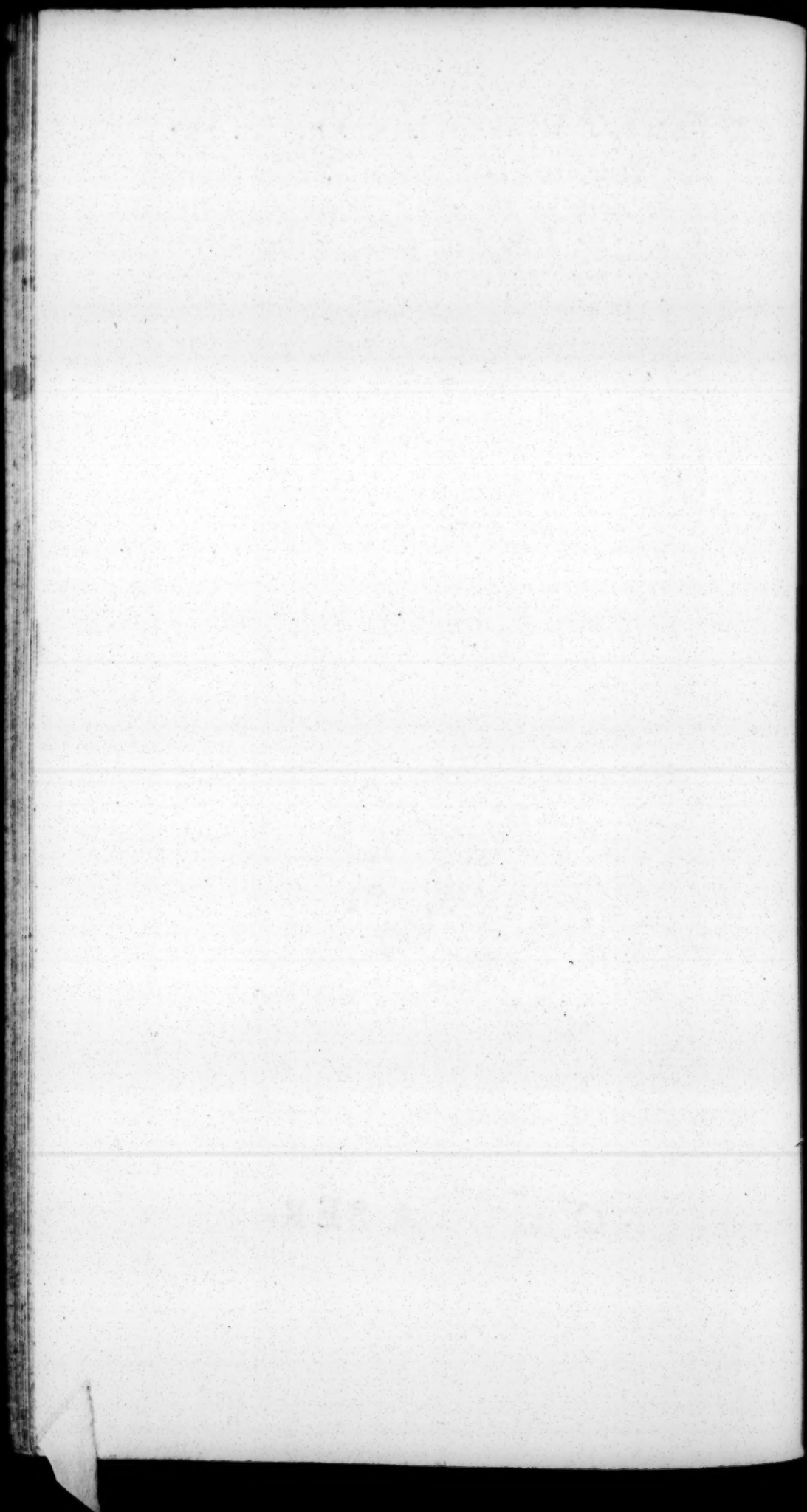
VIII.



examine and amend his *own* Heart, his eyes are continually searching after the *real or imaginary* Faults of *Others*. *Who art Thou that judgest another man's Servant? To his own Master he standeth or falleth.* But if we would observe our Saviour's direction in the Text, and form our Notions of things according to *That* Rule; *herein* we could *never be deceived*. The Judgments of God, which we see abroad in the World, are a *proper* and *continual* Warning to *All* Sinners, to bring them to *Repentance* and *effectual Amendment*: Without which, they must *All* finally and inevitably perish. The *Jews*, to whom our Saviour gave the admonition in the Text, did, at the destruction of *Jerusalem*, perish in great multitudes *literally* by the *very same* calamity, which had before fallen upon the *Galileans* here mentioned. And *all Sinners* in *all Ages*, who see the Judgments of God fall upon *Others*, ought to consider, that they know not how soon the *very same* calamities may fall upon *themselves*. But whether the Punishment overtakes them at all *here*, or no; it will, without timely and effectual Amendment, certainly overtake them *hereafter*. Which is a *much more terrible* consideration. For *if these things*

*things are done in the green Tree, what shall be done in the dry? If judgment begin at the House of God, what shall the End be of them that obey not the Gospel? If the temporal calamities which fall upon mixt multitudes here, of the righteous and wicked together, be so dreadful; what shall the estate be of Those, who shall be punished with EVER-  
LASTING destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his Majesty?*

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A  
S E R M O N

Preach'd in the

Parish-Church of St *James's West-*  
*minster*, Apr. 25, 1723. being  
the Day appointed by his Ma-  
jesty for a Publick *Thanksgiving*  
to God, for preserving His Ma-  
jesty and His Subjects from that  
dreadful *Plague* with which the  
Kingdom of *France* was lately  
Visited ; And for putting an  
End to the same.

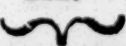
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M A T T. XXIV, 7.

*For Nation shall rise against Nation, and  
Kingdom against Kingdom: And there  
shall be Famines, and Pestilences, and  
Earthquakes in divers Places.*

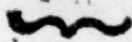
**T**H E S E Words are Part of the Pro-  
phetical description, which Our  
Saviour gives his Disciples a little  
before his Death, of the State of things  
O 4 which

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which should be between That Time and the final Destruction of the Jewish Temple and Nation ; and, under That Type, the State of the World in general during the larger Period, until his coming to Judgment. The *Principal* thing, about which he most *distinctly and particularly* admonishes them, is the *Persecutions and Difficulties* They and their Followers must expect to meet with, more or less, in all Ages. *They shall deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you ; and ye shall be hated of all Nations for my Names Sake : And many shall be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another : And because iniquity shall abound, the Love of Many shall wax cold :* That is ; the general Corruption and Wickedness of the World, shall *discourage* Many, and weary them out, and make them lay aside all Thoughts of Religion, and give themselves up to be carried with the Stream of an unrighteous and debauched World. For there *shall be great Tribulation, such as was not since the Beginning of the World unto This Time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no Flesh be saved :* (That is, The Truth of Religion, if this State of things

were

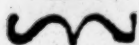
were long to continue, would be *totally* *extinguished* among Men, by the Universality of prevailing Corruptions :) *But, for the Elects sake, those days shall be shortened.* This (I say) is the *Principal* Particular, upon which our Lord here *chiefly* enlarges: That, in after-Ages, men might not be *surprized*, when they should find that the *Prince of Peace* came not to send Peace upon Earth, but a *Sword*; and that the religion of Christ, a religion of the most perfect Simplicity and Plainness, of the completest and most extensive Charity, should be over-run with universal Confusions and Iniquity. But *besides* this *Principal* and more *especial* Aim of his Discourse, he intermixes moreover some general *Intimations* of Other Events which should happen in the World; and particularly of the *Judgments*, where-with the Divine Providence would from time to time punish the unrighteous Nations of the Earth. *Ye shall hear* (says he) *of Wars, and Rumors of Wars: See that ye be not troubled: For all these things must come to pass:-----For Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be Famines, and Pestilences, and Earthquakes in divers places: All these are the Beginnings of Sorrows.* With

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With regard to *Each* of these Particulars, *viz.* the *Persecutions* wherewith *good men* should be oppressed by an *unrighteous World*, and the *Judgments* wherewith the *Divine Providence* should at any time punish the *Nations of the Earth*; the Advice our Lord gives his Disciples, is, to *PRAY* constantly to God, that he would be pleased either to *prevent* these things coming upon them, or to *deliver* them out of them, or to *lighten* the Burden of them by Providential Supports. *Pray* ye, says he, *that your Flight be not in the Winter, neither on the Sabbath-day.* And; *Watch ye therefore, and Pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.* Now the same reason that there is, why we ought at any time to *PRAY*, that God *would* either *prevent* or *remove* from us any Calamity; the *very same* reason there is, to return him our *THANKS* and *PRAISE*, whenever he *has* been pleased either to *withdraw* from us any such Calamity, or the apparent *Danger* of it. The *Ground* of Both, is the *same*; that God, who has Power over

over All, is the Alone Disposer of all E- Sermon.  
vents; and that That Disposition of IX.  
mind, which leads men to apply to *Him* ~~~~~  
for all the good things they want, and to  
make Acknowledgment to *Him* for all  
the Benefits they have received, is one of  
the principal of those Qualifications which  
recommend men to the Divine Favour,  
and to the more immediate Care and Pro-  
tection of his good Providence. The  
Meaning of which is, not that even the  
*Best of men* can have any certain Security  
that they shall escape the Calamities of  
this present Life; nay, in Some cases,  
as in That of Persecution particularly, they  
are *for That very reason* the *most* exposed,  
because they are the *Best* men: But the  
Meaning is, that God who *created* the *ma-*  
*terial* World for the Sake of the *Moral*  
one, and *governs* the *former* always with  
a View to the *Latter*; (For the unintelli-  
gent *material* World, how exquisite so-  
ever the Fabrick of it be, is *Nothing at*  
*all* any otherwise, than as it has relation  
to *Intelligent* and *Rational* Beings that  
inhabit it :) God, I say, who *created* the  
*material* World merely for the Sake of  
the *Moral* one, and *governs* the *former*  
always with a View to the *Latter*, will  
certainly make *all things* (sooner or later)  
work

Serm. *work together for Good to them that*  
 IX. *love him, Rom. viii, 28. Even the severe*

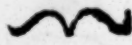
*rest Judgments that he ever sends upon*  
 the World, and which *to incorrigible Sin-*  
*ners* are the Messengers of *Destruction*;  
 even *These*, to well-disposed Minds, are  
 either at a distance *Warnings* and *Admo-*  
*nitions* to amend: Or they are *Chastise-*  
*ments* inflicted for their *correction*; which,  
 though at present they cannot but be  
 grievous, yet *afterwards* they yield the  
*peaceable Fruit of Righteousness* unto  
 them which are exercised thereby: Or  
 they are *Trials* of mens *Faith* and *Pa-*  
*tience*; which being much more precious  
 than of gold that perishes, though it be  
 tried with Fire, will be found unto  
*Praise and Honour and Glory at the Ap-*  
*pearing of Jesus Christ*: Or, sometimes,  
 they are means of *taking away the Righ-*  
*teous* from greater *Evils* to come; so that  
*Though They seem to be punished for a lit-*  
*tle while*, yet is their *Hope* full of *Im-*  
*mortality*: Or, however it be, still (as the  
 Apostle expresses it) *the Lord knoweth*  
*how to deliver the godly out of Tempta-*  
*tions, and to reserve the unjust unto the*  
*day of judgment to be punished*: And the  
 Righteous have always *This Security*, that  
*God is Faithful, who will not suffer them*



to be tempted above that they are able; but will with the Temptation also make a way to escape, that they may be able to bear it. Nevertheless, since God only knows the Events of things, and no man can be sure of his own Strength; therefore Reason teaches, and our Lord expressly directs us, to *Pray*, that we may not be led into *Temptation*. And for the same reason, 'tis our duty to be *Thankful* whenever Providence has prevented any Temptation from coming upon us. And the case is the same, with regard to *Every* sort of *Affliction* or *Calamity* in Life. God is *able*, and will certainly cause all these things to *work together for good*, to Those who are truly and sincerely religious. Yet, sensible of our own Unworthiness; and knowing that these things are also sometimes Messengers of *Wrath*, and Instruments of *Destruction*; 'tis therefore our Duty to *pray* continually for the *Averting* of them, and to return *Thanks* for every *Escape of Danger* from them, and to be always ready to make a religious Use either of their being *inflicted* or *prevented*. See that ye be not troubled, says our Lord; For all these things *MUST* come to pass:----For Nation shall rise against Nation, and Kingdom against King-

Serm. *Kingdom; and there shall be Famines,*  
 IX. *and Pestilences, and Earthquakes in di-*  
 vers Places.

The *Particulars* of this Prophecy of our Lord, *we* have seen *literally* and *remarkably* fulfilled in *our own* Days: And yet God has been graciously pleased, not to suffer *any One* of these Calamities to come nigh *Our* Dwellings. We have seen *Nation* rise up against *Nation*, and *Kingdom* against *Kingdom*: We have seen *Fire* and *Sword* consume round about us, and many Fruitful Countries ravaged and destroyed: Yet at the same time, *we* have sat every man *under his Vine* and *under his Fig-Tree*; injoying all the Blessings and Happiness of *Peace*, even in the midst of the most Bloody and destructive *Wars*. We have seen *Want* and *Famine* spread Desolation over different Countries, whilst *we* have been even luxurious in the Abundance of overflowing *Plenty*. We have known populous and flourishing Towns, overthrown in one day with a Storm and *Earthquake*; while *Our* Habitation has been, as the Scripture speaks, the *Munition of Rocks*: So that the Psalmist's Ground of Praise, (Ps. cxxv, 2, *As the Hills stand about Jerusalem, even*

so standeth the Lord round about his People,) may very properly be applied to US: As the Seas encompass our Land,  Sermon IX.

may we no less justly say, even so has the Protection of Providence surrounded us on every side. Lastly, (which is the more immediate and particular occasion of our meeting together at *This Time* to return Thanks to God;) we have seen *That Destroying Angel*, the *Pestilence*, executing in particular Places the unsearchable Judgments of God; but holding forth to US This Terror, at a remote Distance only; to admonish and warn us, (*not* to imagine that those particular persons, upon whom this divine judgment fell, were *Sinners above all men that dwelt* on the Earth; but that we might take notice,) that, unless we repent, we shall *All likewise perish*. This is the Proper End and Design of *All* God's Temporal Judgments; to warn men to amend: And the only valuable Expression of *Thankfulness*, for his having at any time *Averted* from us impending Dangers; is our being thereby led to a more careful Obedience. There is no where in the whole New Testament a severer character given of incorrigible Sinners, than in those Passages where they are described as not only over-looking all the general Works

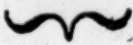


Serm. Works of Nature and Providence, but as

IX. continuing moreover unmoved even at  
 the most *Exemplary* Expressions of the  
 Divine *Wrath*, and unthankfully insensi-  
 ble even of the most remarkable *Delive-*  
*rances*. Rev. ix, 20; xvi, 9, *The rest of*  
*the men which were not killed by these*  
*Plagues, yet repented not of the Works*  
*of their hands; but blasphemed the Name*  
*of God which has Power over these*  
*Plagues, and repented not to give him*  
*Glory.* To give *Glory* to God, is, to make  
*publick Acknowledgment* of our Sense of  
 God's continually *Governing the World* in  
 Wisdom and Righteousness; To profess  
 our constant *Dependance* upon him, for  
 all the Good things we *hope for* in the  
 Course of *Nature* which *He* has appoint-  
 ed, and under the direction of his All-  
 wise *Providence*; To return him *Thanks*  
 for all the *Benefits* we at any time receive,  
 and for every *Escape* or *Deliverance*  
 vouchsafed us from impending Dangers;  
 And to *Testify* the *Sincerity* of These Ac-  
 knowledgments, by our *Obedience* to him  
 in the course of a *virtuous and religious*  
*Life*; that *Others* likewise, *seeing our*  
*good Works, may glorify our Father which*  
*is in Heaven, and promote His King-*  
*dom,*

dom, which is the Practise of *Virtue and Righteousness* in the World.

Serm.  
IX.



The *Things, for which* it is our Duty always to return Thanks to God, are, *in general, every good thing* we injoy: *Life, Health, Peace, Plenty, Liberty, and every Blessing* whatsoever, in which consists either the Happiness of the *present World*, or the Opportunities of laying a Foundation for *that which is to come*. But as these Blessings never appear so valuable, when by a long uninterrupted injoyment we are accustomed to esteem them *only the common Effects* of the Course of Nature; as when at any time, either by the *actual Want* of them, or by very *apparent Danger of losing* them, we are led to a juster and more considerate estimation of things, and with a more attentive View to behold the Hand from whence they all proceed; hence it is, that either after a *Deliverance* from the Weight of any severe Judgment; or after any remarkable *Escape* from the Terroure of impending Danger, we seem to be in a more *particular* manner called unto *Thankfulness*; though in reality the same Acknowledgment is no less justly due, for the constant and uniform Protection of Providence,

P

Serm. dence. The Blessing of *Peace*, generally, is justly esteemed and valued by  
 IX. *Those only*, who have felt the Misery and Calamities of *War*; And yet, without question, 'tis a *greater Blessing*, to have been *always* preserved from those Calamities. The inestimable Benefit of *Liberty*, hardly ever meets with any just Returns of Thankfulness, but from such as have lately groaned under the cruel Bondage of *Tyranny* and *Oppression*; And yet, without all controversy, in the true estimation of things, a *greater Acknowledgment* is due from Those who have continually enjoyed That uninterrupted Protection. The Blessing of *Health* itself, That Necessary Foundation of all other Injoyments whatsoever, very rarely meets with any Just Sense of its real and intrinsic Value, except in Those who have long been afflicted with the *Want* of it; And yet, without Dispute, the continual *Preservation* of it, is a *greater Blessing* than the most unexpected *Recovery*. In like manner, in the Instance of the *Particular occasion* upon which we are assembled at This Time: Had it pleased God, that the devouring Pestilence had *nearly approached* our Dwellings; Had it swept away our *dearest Relations*, or our most



valuable Friends ; Or if even among Those only, for whom we had no further Concern than what arises from the general Ties of Humanity and the natural Sympathies of Neighbourhood, we had seen thousands fall beside us, and ten thousands at our right hand ; Who is there, that does not feel within himself, with what a profound Sense of the Divine Goodness, the Survivors would have expressed their Thankfulness for the mercy of *their own* Deliverance. And yet, in reality, how insensible soever Many of us may be of the real Value of the Blessing, a Greater Blessing it is (unless our own Unthankfulness makes it to US cease in event to be so ; a Greater Blessing, I say, it is,) to have had so severe a Judgment prevented from approaching us at all. For This Instance therefore of the Divine Mercy towards us, it becomes us to return in a particular manner our most solemn Thanks. And This Expression of our Duty, will Then be acceptable in the Sight of God ; if it leaves upon our minds a lasting impression, that, except we repent, we shall still all perish. If the Thankfulness of our Mouths, be not accompanied with the real Sense of our Hearts, and a suitable consequent

Serm.  
IX.

Serm. Obedience in our *Lives and Practise*; God

IX. can still at any time commission his *destroying Angel*, to smite us in a moment. Or, if we continue to provoke him, he can inflict Judgments upon us *much more severe* than the most devouring *Pestilence*; by delivering us *into the Hands of MEN*, whose *Mercies are Cruel*. He can deliver us up into the *Lasting Tyranny* of that *Spiritual Babylon*, in whom for many successive Ages has not only been found *the Blood of Prophets and of Saints and of all that were slain upon the Earth*; but by whose *RELIGIOUS Sorceries* also, have *all Nations* been *deceived*: And whose Cruelty has not been more destructive to the *Lives* of men, than pernicious to their *Souls* also, by *taking away the Key of Knowledge*, and establishing a *Blind Implicit Ignorance*, utterly subversive of the very Foundations of all *rational Regard to God*, and of all *Truth, Justice, and Righteousness* towards *Men*. *Hitherto* it has pleased God, to preserve us from *This* calamity also; from this *severest* of all the Divine Judgments; and which, of all Others, has the *most nearly* and *most continually* threatened us. For *This preservation* therefore, ought we *likewise* continually to return  
our

our most *Solemn Thanks* to the Divine Majesty. And 'tis *the more reasonable* so to do, because the Calamity I am now speaking of, is *That very Tribulation*, in comparison of which our Saviour tells us that all the things mentioned by him in the Text, (*Nation's rising against Nation, and Kingdom against Kingdom; and Famines, and Pestilences, and Earthquakes in divers places; all these, says he, are but the BEGINNING of Sorrows.*)

Serm.  
IX.

The *Manner*, in which *alone* we can *Acceptably* return *Thanks* to God for all his *Mercies* bestowed upon us, and for *averting These* and all *Other* his *Judgments*, whether they be such as are more immediately of his *Own* inflicting, or whether they be such as are brought upon men by the Wickedness and Perverseness of *Others*: The *only Manner*, I say, in which we can *Acceptably* return *Thanks* to the Almighty for *Any* Blessing, is by having our Minds so influenced with a *real and Lasting Sense* of the Goodness and Mercy of God in his Government of the World, as that we be thereby led effectually to *Obey his Will* in the course of a virtuous and religious Life, bringing



Serm. forth *Fruits* meet for the *Acknowledg-*  
IX. *ments* we profess to make to him. By

~ This, and *This only*, can Our *Praises* be rendered an *Acceptable Sacrifice*; Ps. xxxi, 1, *Rejoice in the Lord, ye RIGHTEOUS*; for it becometh well the *JUST* to be *Thankful*. But of the *Wicked* it may truly be affirmed, that, as their *Prayer*, so their *Praise* also is an *Abomination to the Lord*.

But *more particularly*: If we will behave ourselves worthily, as those who have really a *Thankful Sense* of the Divine Goodness in averting the Judgments which have sometimes threatned us; we must, in the

1<sup>st</sup> place, as *Believers* in God, seriously and sincerely make use of our *Reason*, in banishing from among us That *Atheistical Spirit* prevailing among some men, who, whenever things are seen to proceed from *Natural Causes*, immediately thereupon they endeavour to exclude all consideration of God. As if the abstract word, *Nature*, was a *real intelligent Agent*; or meant any thing more, than the *usual and ordinary Method* of God's governing the World. Which

Foolish

Foolish Mistake arises merely, from mens Serm.  
not distinguishing the *NECESSARY* IX.

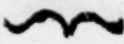
*Nature* of things, from That *AP-POINTED* Course or Order of *Nature*, which is nothing but the *Will of God* and the *Law of his Creation*. For Instance: That *Two and Two should make Four*, or that *a Body should be only in One place at once*, is the *NECESSARY Nature* of things; and *could not* have been otherwise. But when we say, 'tis the *Nature of Corn*, to *grow*; or, 'tis the *Nature of Food*, to *Nourish*; or, 'tis the *Nature of Pestilential Vapours*, to *destroy*: In These and the like Expressions, *Nature* is Nothing but the *voluntary Appointment of God*: And *natural Causes* Here, do really no more exclude consideration of *God*, than any one's affirming that 'tis the *Nature of a Sword* to *kill*, would be a reasonable and satisfactory Ground to forbear any further Inquiry *by what hand* that Instrument of Death was moved. When the Inquiry is concerning the *Efficient Agency*, by *what Power* Plants and Animals are formed, by *what Power* Corn grows, or Food nourishes, and the like: To answer in This case, that 'tis *their NATURE*, or that *'tis natural* for them, so to do; is exactly the same thing,

Serm. as if a man being asked *How* and by  
 IX. *what Architect* a *Palace* was built, should  
 answer, it was *the Nature of it* to be  
 built of *such a Form and Bigness*.

2dly. As *Christians*; 'tis our Duty, not only *in general* to attend to the Hand of *God* in all the Dispensations of Providence, but *moreover* to observe *distinctly* how all the Great Events that happen in the World, are the *Accomplishment* of those things whereof *our Lord admonished* his Disciples from the Beginning; when, in order to wean them from the Vanities of this present World, and to raise their Thoughts to a Better, he foretold them of the *great Calamities* which should fall upon the *Earth* by the *righteous Judgment* of *God*, and the *much greater Calamities* which should be brought upon *THEM* in particular by the *Malice of unrighteous Men*. See (says he) *that ye be not troubled, for all these things must come to pass,-----: For Nation shall rise against Nation, and Kingdom against Kingdom; and there shall be Famines and Pestilences and Earthquakes in divers places: All these are the Beginning of Sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be*



be hated of all Nations for my Sake. Serm.

The Application he makes to them of the Whole, is, (Luke xxi, 34,) *Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted Worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.* IX. 

3dly. If we look upon ourselves still more particularly, as Professors of the Reformed Religion; the Consideration of every Blessing we receive from the hand of Providence, whether *temporal* or *spiritual*, will naturally remind us to express our *Thankfulness to God*, in ways suitable to the *Purity* of the Religion we profess, and to the *Knowledge* he has been pleased to vouchsafe us of his *Truth*. We must express our *real Sense* of his Goodness towards us, by sincerely endeavouring to obey his *Will*; by departing from every *Kind*, and from every *Degree*, of *Superstition*; by laying aside all unchristian *Heats* and *Animosities* among ourselves; by promoting universal *Peace* and *Good Will* among Men; In a word, by showing that we place our Religion, not in fantastical *Notions* or in empty *Forms*, but in a constant rational *Acknowledgment* of *God*, in an impartial *Love* of *Truth*,

Serm. *Truth*, and in the habitual *Practice* of  
 X. *true Virtue*, of *Sobriety*, *Righteousness*  
 and *universal Charity*. This if we do;  
 the Prophecy in the 91<sup>st</sup> Psalm, we may  
 (not without reason) *hope*, even in the  
*first* and *literal* sense; but in the *spiritual* and *final* sense *Certainly*, it shall be  
 fulfilled to *US*. *Who*so dwelleth under  
 the defence of the most High, shall abide  
 under the shadow of the Almighty: He  
 shall deliver thee from the Snare of the  
 Hunter, and from the noisom Pestilence:  
 Thou shalt not be afraid for any Terror  
 by Night, nor for the arrow that flieth  
 by day: For the Pestilence that walketh  
 in darkness, nor for the Sickness that de-  
 stroyeth in the Noon-day; A thousand  
 shall fall beside thee, and ten thousand  
 at thy right hand, but it shall not come  
 nigh Thee: There shall no Evil happen  
 unto thee, neither shall any Plague come  
 nigh thy Dwelling.

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A  
S E R M O N

Preach'd in the  
PARISH-CHURCH  
O F

*St James's Westminster,*

On Sunday, March 31, 1717.

---

M A T T. XVI, 18.

*And I say also unto thee, that Thou art  
Peter; and upon This Rock I will  
build my Church, and the gates of  
Hell shall not prevail against it.*

**T**HE Occasion and Connexion of Serm.  
these Words, is This. Our Sa- X.  
viour, examining his Disciples how  
far they *understood* the Doctrine they had  
been taught; asks them, *ver. 13, Whom  
do men say, that I, the Son of Man,  
am?* The very character he here and else-  
where



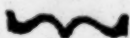
Serm. where gives himself, *I the Son of Man*,  
 X. was a sufficiently plain intimation *Who* he  
 was. For the phrase, *THE Son of man*, necessarily signifies one who is so styled by way of Eminence or Distinction; And, in Discourse with persons who had been educated *Jews*, it could not but be understood to refer to the Use of That Title or Character somewhere in the *Old Testament*. Now the Passage where 'tis mentioned in the most remarkable and distinguishing manner, is in the Prophecy of *Daniel*, ch. vii, 13, *Behold, one like the Son of Man, came with the Clouds of Heaven; (The Son of Man, which is in Heaven, as our Saviour styles himself in the Gospel, John iii, 13;) and came to the Antient of Days, and they brought him near before him: And there was given him Dominion and Glory and a Kingdom, that all people, nations and languages, should serve him: His Dominion is an everlasting Dominion, which shall not pass away; and his Kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.* The *Jews* all very well knew, that this was a plain Prophecy and Character of the *Messiah*. And therefore our Saviour, by taking upon himself That Title by way of Eminence, *THE Son of Man*; clearly enough

inti-

intimated, *Whom* he professed himself to be. However, in order to put his Disciples upon a more distinct declaration *how far* they had hitherto understood him; and thereby to introduce a new occasion of giving them further and more particular instructions; he asks them, *ver.* 13, *Whom do men say that I am?* The Disciples answered; *Some say that thou art John the Baptist, some Elias, and Others Jeremias, or one of the Prophets.* He saith unto them, *But whom say Ye that I am?* Simon Peter answered, *Thou art Christ the Son of the Living God.* Then said Jesus unto him, *Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven.* That is; The Confession you have made, is not a bare human conjecture or Opinion; as the Jews had guessed him to be either *Elias*, or *John the Baptist*, or one of the old Prophets risen from the Dead: but *Your* confession (says he,) is the *Very Truth*; which God has enabled you to discover. *And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter,* *ver.* 18: *Thou Simon the Son of Jonah, shalt for the future be known by the Name of Peter,* which signifies a *Rock*; a firm and constant,

Serm.

X.



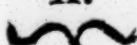
Serm. stant, an unshaken and immoveable, Pro-  
 X. fessor of the Truth. 'Tis very Usual in  
 ~~~~~ Scripture, to give men in this manner *Em-  
 phatical* and *significant* Names. Thus
*Gen. xvii, 5, Thy Name shall be Abra-
 ham; for a Father of many Nations*
 (so the word *Abraham* signifies in the Ori-
 ginal,) *a Father of many Nations have
 I made thee.* Again; *Gen. xxxii, 28,
 Thy name shall be called Israel; for as a
 Prince hast thou power with God and
 with men, and hast prevailed.* So here
 likewise, *Thou art Peter*, that is, a *Rock*;
 a firm and constant, a faithful and un-
 shaken Witness, Support, and Defender
 of the Truth. *And upon This Rock*, up-
 on this Firmness and Steadiness of yours
 in professing and preaching the great Truths
 of the Gospel, upon This *will I build
 my Church; and the Gates of Hell shall
 not prevail against it. And I will give
 unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of
 Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind
 on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven; and
 whatsoever thou shalt loose on Earth,
 shall be loosed in Heaven.*

In order to the fuller and clearer under-
 standing of which whole Discourse of our
 Saviour; it will be necessary to explain
 from

Serm.
X.

from the Beginning, the nature and meaning, the ground and reason, of that Metaphor or figure of speaking, which in numberless other places of Scripture, as well as in this Text, is used with great Propriety and Elegance in the Description of the Church of Christ. 'Tis to be observed therefore, that God having antiently placed his Name in *Jerusalem*, that is, having appointed it to be the Seat of his Throne and Worship, the Place of confluence of the Worshippers of the One True God; and thereby made it by way of eminence *The City of the Great King, The Holy City*; it from thence became, in the prophetick Style and Language, a Type of *Heaven*. From hence, in the New Testament, the *State of Heaven* is figuratively stiled, *Jerusalem which is Above*, Gal. iv, 26: *Mount Sion, the heavenly Jerusalem*, Heb. xii, 22. And in the *Revelation* particularly, 'tis described at large, under the Notion of a glorious and happy City; ch. xxi, 10, *He shewed me that great City, the Holy Jerusalem, descending out of Heaven from God; Having the Glory of God, and her Light was like unto a Stone most precious:---And the City was pure Gold; ---and the foundations were garnished with*

Serm. *with all manner of precious Stones. To*

X. which description, the Apostle plainly
 alludes, *Heb. xi, 16, He hath prepared
 for them a City: And again in the same*
 ver. 16. Chapter, *They desire (says he) a better
 country, that is, an heavenly: And, A-*
 ver. 10. *braham looked for a City which hath
 Foundations, (in the original it is, THE
 City which hath THE Foundations,) whose Builder and Maker is God. Hence
 still further, in pursuance of the same Si-*
militude, the Church of God even here
upon EARTH, is stiled The City, the
Temple, and the House of God. The
City of God: Ps. xlv, 4, The Streams
thereof, shall make glad the CITY of God.
Heb. xii, 22, Ye are come unto---the CITY of
the living God,---the general Assembly and
Church of the first-born whose Names
are written in Heaven. Also the Tem-
ple of God: 1 Cor. iii, 16, Ye are the
TEMPLE of God; And 2 Cor. vi, 16,
Ye are the TEMPLE of the Living
God. Eph. ii, 19, Ye are fellow-citizens
with the Saints, and of the household of
God; And are built upon the Founda-
tion of the Apostles and Prophets, Je-
sus Christ himself being the chief corner
stone; In whom the whole building fitly
framed together, groweth into an Holy

TE M-

TEMPLE in the Lord; In whom Sermon.
 You also are builded together, for an habi- X.
 tation of God through the Spirit. And
 2 Thes. ii, 3, That Man of Sin, -----sit-
 ting in the TEMPLE of God; That is,
 a general Apostacy and Love of Worldly
 Power, overspreading the Visible Church
 Lastly, 'tis stiled likewise The HOUSE
 of God: 1 Tim. iii, 15, The HOUSE
 of God, which is the Church. Heb. iii, 6,
 whose HOUSE are We. 1 Cor. iii, 9,
 We are God's BUILDING. 1 Pet. ii, 5,
 We also as Lively Stones, are built up a
 spiritual HOUSE unto God. And ch.
 iv, 17, Judgment must begin at the
 HOUSE of God.

Now the Church of God being thus
 usually, (upon the occasion and for the
 reasons already explained,) represented in
 Scripture under the figurative Notion of
 a Holy City, or Temple, or House of
 God; the several Parts of it likewise, in
 pursuance of the same Metaphor, are de-
 scribed proportionably under the like cha-
 racters, and with the like figures of Speech,
 as the Whole. Hence the word, Founda-
 tion, as denoting the most material part
 and Support of the whole Building, is ele-
 gantly made use of to signify either such Men

Q

or

Serm. or *Things*, such *Persons* or *Doctrines*,
 X. *upon which* the whole of Religion main-
 ly relies, and *by which* it is principally
 supported.

Sometimes it is applied to *Doctrines*:
 To denote those *great*, those *primary*,
 those *necessary and essential* doctrines of
 religion; *upon which*, all other true do-
 ctrines are built; *without which*, religion
 cannot subsist; and *of which*, no Chri-
 stian can innocently or excusably be ig-
 norant. These are stiled, *Heb. v, 12, The first Principles of the Oracles of God*;
 and *Heb. vi, 1, The Principles of the do-
 ctrine of Christ*, and *The Foundation*.
 In *modern* language, they are usually called
The Fundamentals of religion; the Do-
 ctrines, wherein *Christianity itself* con-
 sists; in opposition to those, which di-
 stinguish from each other the several *Sects*
 or *Parties* of Christians. In the *former*,
 consists all true Virtue and Piety: The
Latter, are the Occasions of never-cea-
 sing Contentions, Schisms and Uncharita-
 bleness. *What* these Fundamental Do-
 ctrines in particular *are*, (though *St Paul*
 has given us an express Catalogue of
 them, *Heb. vi; 1, 2,*) seldom Any Sect or
 Party of Christians are willing to define;

be-

because by so doing they would plainly discover, that the things about which they generally most fiercely contend, are indeed no necessary parts of religion *at all*.

But in the *Scripture itself*, these fundamental Doctrines are perpetually insisted on; and inculcated, as those on which in reality *the Whole* of Religion depends.

And the teaching or preaching of these Doctrines, is what St Paul calls *Laying the Foundation*, (Heb. vi, 1; And 1 Cor.

iii, 10,) *According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master-builder I have laid the FOUNDATION.* But let every man (says he) take

heed how he buildeth thereupon: For *other Foundation can no man lay, than That is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*

The meaning is; No man can make any thing else to be *fundamental* in religion, besides what Christ himself has made to be so. *If any man build upon this Foundation, gold, silver, precious Stones;* if

he preaches the true doctrine of the Gospel, and builds thereupon Virtuous Practice; *he shall receive a reward*, ver. 14.

If he corrupts the doctrine of Christ in its essentials, and teaches men any vitious Practice; he shall be punished very severely. If he builds *wood, hay, stubble;* that

Serm. is, if he teaches needles and useles, tho'
 X. not vitious doctrines; *he shall suffer Loss,*
 he shall in great part lose his Reward:
 Nevertheless, for the Sincerity of his In-
 tention, *he himself shall be saved, yet so*
as by Fire, ver. 15. The sense is, *He shall*
be saved DIFFICULTLY, as it were
out of the Fire; According to the like
 expression in *St Jude,* ver. 22, *Of some*
have compassion, making a difference; and
Others save with Fear, pulling them out
of the Fire.

But further: The word, *Foundation,*
 as it is thus sometimes applied figura-
 tively to *Doctrines* fundamental; so, at
 Other times, it is in a proportionable
 Sense, applied likewise to *Persons.* Thus
 (in the passage before-cited,) *Eph. ii, 20,*
Ye are built upon the FOUNDATION
of the APOSTLES and PRO-
PHETS. From whence is derived
 That elegant and lively description, *Rev.*
xxi, 14, The Wall of the City had twelve
Foundations, and in Them the Names of
the twelve Apostles of the Lamb. Je-
 sus Christ himself, is the Chief corner-
 stone: The Apostles and Prophets, are
 the Foundation: And the Church or en-
 tire Body of good Men through all Ages,
 are

are the whole *Building* or spiritual *Temple* of God ; in which *Ye also*, saith the Apostle, (*ye also, as living Stones*, 1 Pet. ii, 5,) *are builded together, for an habitation of God through the Spirit*. And Such persons as, after the first preaching of the Gospel, were, in a more eminent and illustrious manner, Promoters of true Religion ; are, by continuing the same Similitude, aptly called *Pillars*, Gal. ii, 19, *James, Cephas and John, who seemed to be PILLARS*: And Rev. iii, 12, *Him that overcometh, will I make a PILLAR in the Temple of my God*. Which Passages, by the way, teach us to rectify a Mistake in the vulgar interpretation of that noted Text of St Paul, 1 Tim. iii, 15, *That thou mayst know how to behave thy self in the House of God, which is the Church of the Living God, the PILLAR and Ground of Truth*. That St Paul in one and the same Sentence, wherein he calls the *Church* the *HOUSE of God*, should at the same time stile it also a *PILLAR*, which is a *Part* of that house ; is very hard to conceive. From the fore-cited places therefore, and others of the like import, where the same word is always applied to *single PERSONS* ; it seems very probable, that

Serm.
X.

Eph. ii,
22.

Serm. *Here also* it ought to be understood, not
 X. of the *whole Church*, but of *one person*
 only, even of *Timothy* himself: *That*
thou mayst know how thou oughtest to be-
have thyself in the house of God, which
is the Church of the Living God; that
 thou mayst know how to behave thyself
 therein in such manner, (*as being*, or) as
 that Thou mayst be *a Pillar and* an emi-
 nent *Support of the Truth*. The sense
 is much more reasonable, and agreeable
 to other places of Scripture; and removes
 a difficult expression, [much abused and
 perverted by Popish Writers to support
 their absurd Doctrine of the Infallibility
 of the Church,

Having thus fully and at large explained
 from its first original, the nature and mean-
 ing, the ground and reason, of that Meta-
 phor or Figure of speaking, which in num-
 berless other places of Scripture, as well as
 in my Text, is used with great Propriety
 and Elegance in the Description of the
 Church of Christ; It from hence be-
 comes very easy to understand the true
 sense of these words of our Saviour, *Thou*
art Peter, Thou art (as thy Name signi-
 fies) *a Rock*; and upon this Rock will I
 build my Church. The Church, is the
 City,

City, the Temple, the House or Building of God. In this spiritual Temple of God, *Serm. X.*

Jesus Christ himself is the chief corner-stone, in whom the whole Building is fitly framed together. And the Apostles and Prophets, are the Foundation. Among These, St Peter having, with a particular Forwardness and Zeal, made confession of his believing Christ to be the Messiah; was accordingly approved by his Master, and receives the following Answer. *Thou shalt be, (says our Lord,) one principal Foundation-stone in my Building. By thy firmness and steddiness, by thy Courage, Constancy and Zeal in this confession, thou shalt become an Eminent Founder of my Church, a most successful Preacher of my Doctrine to the World, in the first Age of the Gospel. Thou art Peter, Thou art a Rock; and upon this Rock I will build my Church.*

It follows; *And the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.* That is; Opposition and Persecution, even unto *Death itself*, shall never be able to stop the Progress of my Gospel. The word, which we here render *Hell*, signifies in ^{Adms.} the Original, not *The State of the damned*, (for *That* is always in the Greek ex- ^{Γέννημα.}

Serm. pressed by a very different word;) But
 X. the word *Here* used, signifies always *That*
 invisible state in general only, to which
Death is the *Gate* or *Passage*. So that
 This Phrase in the Text, is exactly of the
 same import with those expressions in the
 Old Testament: *The Gates of the Grave*,
The Chambers of Death, and *The Gates*
of Death. Is. xxxviii, 10, *I shall go to the*
Gates of the Grave. Prov. vii, 27, *The way*
to Hell, Going down to the Chambers of
Death. Job xxxviii, 17, *Have the Gates of*
Death been opened unto thee? Ps. ix, 13,
Thou liftest me up from the Gates of
Death: And Ps. cvii, 18, *They draw near*
unto the Gates of Death. When therefore
 our Saviour promises that the *Gates of Hell*,
 that is, of *Death*; (for the word *Hell*, as
 I now observed, when it means *The State*
of the Damned, is always in the origi-
 nal quite another Word :) When, I say,
 our Saviour promises that the *Gates of*
Hell, that is, of *Death*, *shall not prevail*
against his Church; his Meaning plainly
 is the same, as in those other Promises,
Matt. xxviii, 20, Lo, I am with you al-
ways, even unto the End of the World;
 your mortality shall not put an end to the
 preaching of my Gospel. And *ch. xviii,*
20, Where two or three, (wheresoever
 or

or whensoever, in what *place* or at what *time* soever in Any Age of the World, *(two or three)* are gathered together in *my Name*; *there am I in the midst of them.* Serm. X.

Lastly, our Saviour adds in the *next* words, immediately following the Text: *And I will give unto THEE the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven: And whatsoever THOU shalt bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever THOU shalt loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven.* The sense is; Thou shalt first *open* the Kingdom of the Messias, and make the *first publication* of the Gospel to the Gentiles; (which we read was accordingly fulfilled, in the 2^d, 10th, and 15th chapters of the *Acts*.) And by the Terms of *That Doctrine* which I commission *you* to preach *on Earth*, shall every man's Sentence be finally and judicially determined of God in *Heaven*.

And now, having distinctly explained the full meaning of our Saviour, in this whole Discourse of his to St *Peter*; it will be very obvious to raise from thence the following Observations.

1st, I

Serm.

X.

1st, I observe, that according to the true explication of the word, it makes no real Difference at all in the Sense, whether by the *Rock* upon which our Saviour here promises to build his Church, be meant (as *Protestant* Expositors generally understand it) the *CONFESSION* of *St Peter*, or (as the *Romish* Writers contend) the *PERSON* of *St Peter*. I say, it makes no difference at all, as to the true Sense of the Words. For, if this *Rock* be the *CONFESSION* of *St Peter*; yet the application of the phrase to *Him* in so particular a manner, must needs be with regard to his *Personal* Firmness and Steadiness in that confession. And if it be the *PERSON* of *St Peter*, that is here stiled a *Rock*; 'tis still with regard to his Firmness in That *Confession*. From whence nothing can be collected to the Advantage of the cause of the Church of *Rome*. For

2^{dly}, I observe, that the word *Rock*, the *Foundation-stone* of a Building, a strong or well-laid Support, is not at all (as the Church of *Rome* ridiculously supposes) an Emblem of *Authority*, *Power* or *Dominion*; but it signifies *firm* and

constant, effectual and successful, Preaching of the Gospel at the Beginning: Which was the *Foundation* of the Church of Christ. Which *Church*, the Scripture tells us, was built upon the *Foundation* of the *Apostles and Prophets*. And in That Foundation, *St Peter* was a *Rock*, or a firm and eminent part of it.

Serm.
X.

3dly. I observe, that *immediately* after the speaking of these great things to *St Peter*; our Lord, (as it were with a *particular View* that it might be left upon Record as a Guard against that extravagant Opinion, which he foreknew future Ages, for the Purposes of Tyranny and worldly Dominion, would entertain of *St Peter's Personal Authority*;) our Lord, I say, takes occasion in his very *next* Discourse with him, to rebuke him with a *sharper severity* than he ever used towards any of the rest of his Disciples. *Ver. 23, Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an Offense unto me; For thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of Men.* And probably for the very *same reason* it is, that he was suffered to *fall* and to *deny his Master*, more shamefully than any of the Other Disciples; and that 'tis particularly recorded in

Scrip-

Serm. Scripture-history, how *St Paul* afterwards
 X. withstood him to the face, because he was
 to be blamed, Gal. ii. 11. Of the same
 Kind seems to be our Saviour's affecting
 as it were, to speak always with very small
 Respect of the *Blessed Virgin*: *Woman,*
what have I to do with thee? And,
Tea RATHER Blessed are they,
that hear the word of God, and keep
it. And again; *Who is my Mother,*
and who are my Brethren?-----Be-
 hold, whosoever shall do the Will of
 my Father which is in Heaven, the
 same is my Brother and Sister and Mo-
 ther.

4thly. I observe, that as the word *Rock*
 signifies nothing of *Authority* or *Dom-*
nion, but a *Stone* or *firm Part* in the
FOUNDATION on which the Church
 is built; so it is a *Character*, in which
St Peter could not possibly have *ANT*
Successors; in any other sense, than in
 That wherein *He himself* applies it to
ALL Christians in general; in his first
 epistle, ch. ii, 5, *YE also* (saith he) as *Li-*
ving Stones, are built up a *spiritual*
House unto God. And *St Paul* to the
Ephesians, chap. ii, 22, *You also are build-*
ed together, upon the foundation of the
 Apo-

Apostles and Prophets, into an Holy Temple, for an Habitation of God thro' the Spirit.

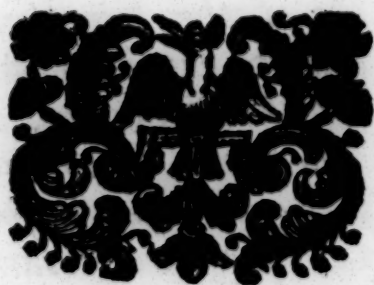
Serm.

X.

sthly. I observe, that what is here said to St Peter, is elsewhere applied equally to ALL the Apostles. The City of God, saith St John, had twelve Foundations, and in them the Names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb. The Church was built equally upon them All. And our Saviour with great expressness and earnestness charges them, that there should be no such thing as *Dominion* or *Preheminence* amongst them; but *Whosoever* (says he) *will be great among you, let him be your Servant*, Matt. xx, 27. Further: That which is here spoken to St Peter about having the *Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven*, is elsewhere expressly directed to ALL the Apostles: John xx, 23, *Whosoever Sins YE remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever Sins YE retain, they are retained*. The full meaning of which sublime expressions, is not, that even the Apostles themselves, (much less that any of their Fallible Successors,) had a *discretionary* Power of forgiving or retaining mens Sins; But, that they were appointed

Preach-

Serm. Preachers and Messengers of That gracious Covenant of Reconciliation, according to the *Terms* and *Conditions* whereof, God will either forgive mens Sins or not. God will judge men *according to OUR Gospel*; or by the Rule of That Doctrine, which *we* are commanded to preach to the World. St *Paul* expresses the Sense of This Trust, with the greatest exactness of expression, *Rom. ii, 16*; *In the day*, says he, *when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to MY Gospel.*



A
S E R M O N

Preach'd in the
PARISH-CHURCH
O F

St James's Westminster,

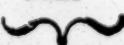
On Sunday, March 23, 1718.

GEN. XV, 6.

*And he Believed in the Lord, and he
counted it to him for Righteousness,*

THESE words are Part of the History of the Patriarch *Abraham*. Who when, in his old age, being yet childless, he had a Promise made to him, that his Posterity should be as the Stars of Heaven for multitude; notwithstanding the Natural Improbability of the Thing, yet (the Text tells us) *he Believed in the*

Serm.
XI.



Serm. *the Lord, and the Lord counted it to him*
 XI. *for righteousness.* The Words are very

remarkable: And they are in the *New Testament* cited, *Three* several times. By the Apostle *St James*, Once: And by *St Paul* twice; in his epistle to the *Romans*, and again in his epistle to the *Galatians*. By *St Paul* they are cited to *prove*, that since *Abraham's Faith* was here reckoned to him for righteousness, *before* the institution of Circumcision; therefore *Justification*, or the Favour and Acceptance of God, *is not* confined and limited to the Observers of the *Works* of the *Jewish law*, but extends itself to *All* men, of *All Nations*, who *walk in the Steps of the Faith of Abraham*. By *St James* they are cited to *prove* at the same time, that since the *Faith of Abraham* here reckoned to him for Righteousness, was not a mere unactive *Belief*, but an *effectual Principle* of real active *Obedience*; therefore *Justification*, or the Favour and Acceptance of God, *is* confined and limited, though *not* to the Observers of the *Works* of the *Jewish Law*, yet certainly to the Practicers of the *Virtue and Righteousness* of the *Gospel*. The *Application* of the Words to *each* of these Purposes respectively, is as *natural* and

Rom. iv,
 12.

per-

pertinent as possible; And the *Inference* drawn from them, in *Each* case, is most *obvious* and *certain*. My Design is not, at This time, to enlarge any further upon the manner of reconciling *St Paul* and *St James*; (which has often been done upon *Other* occasions, and is *sufficiently evident* from the *single Observation* I now mentioned;) but to consider *what* Matter of *Instruction* may be drawn from the *words themselves*; as they lie before us in the Text; *Abraham believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for Righteousness*.

Serm.
XI.

Faith, or *Belief in God*, is the *Foundation* and *Ground of virtuous Practice*. And in proportion as this Foundation is deeply and strongly laid, in the same proportion will the Superstructure be durable and permanent against the Attacks of *Worldly Temptations*. For though *Virtue is Virtue*, whether there were any God or no; and the doing of what is *Right*, would be unquestionably commendable, though there were no Reward or Punishment either here or hereafter: Yet, in That case, the Nature of things would be absurd; and the System of the Universe would be, in the Whole, an inconsistency.

R

sistency.

Serm. sistency. For, that *That* which is *Right*
 XI. *in itself*, and necessarily *so judged to be*

by every *Right Understanding*, and which by consequence lays a necessary and perpetual *Obligation upon All*; should yet not be *finally and effectually supported*; is really and truly as *Great an Inconsistency* in the Notion of the *Moral Universe*, as if in the *Natural World* any of the greatest and most exquisite Operations, were *without* any correspondent *final Cause*. By *This Argument* therefore the wisest and most rational men in the *Heathen World*, who had no Assistance of Revelation at all, yet worked themselves up to a very strong Perswasion, both of the *Being* and of the *Righteous Government of God*. By *the same Argument* the *Patriarchs*, who had *no express* Revelation of a future State, yet reasoned themselves into such Acts of Obedience towards God, as overcame the strongest Temptations in the World. Of *Instances* of This kind, the whole *11th* Chapter of the epistle to the *Hebrews* is an affectionate Collection. And the *Application* of *These Examples*, to *Christians* who profess to have a *more explicit* Knowledge of a Life to come, is matter of very
 just

just and severe Reproach. That which *Alone* falls, *at this Time*, under our consideration; and is, more frequently than Any, insisted upon in many *Other* Places likewise of Holy Scripture; is the *Example* of *Abraham*. *Abraham* believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for Righteousness.

Serm.
XI.

Faith, is *That Belief* of a God; of his Existence, Perfections, Government and Promises; *That Belief* of things *invisible*, and of things *future*; which is the proper *Motive*, whereby Virtuous and Religious Minds are *supported* in the Practice of what is Just and Right, in opposition to all the *Allurements*, and to all the *Threatnings*, laid before them at any time by an *idolatrous*, an *unrighteous*, or a *debauched* World. In proportion to the *Strength* or *Weakness* of *This Faith*, Minds sensible of the natural and intrinsic Excellency of Virtue, are enabled to *resist* more and greater *Temptations* of all kinds, and thereby to bear Testimony to the Excellency of Virtue, and to cause its Light to shine forth in the World: Which is promoting the *Glory* of God, and of His *Government*. These *Temptations*, are what the Scripture calls the

Serm. *Trial of mens Faith.* And God, when
 XII. in the Course of his Providence he permits them to be laid before men, is in Scripture represented as *making Tryal of them* thereby. Not for *his Own* information, who knows perfectly the Hearts of all men; But for *Their Own* Benefit, whose Minds are greatly improved thereby; And for the Advantage of *Others*, who are extremely encouraged by such Examples. It has therefore been the Method of Providence from the Beginning, not only by the *Precepts of Nature and Reason*, confirmed by repeated *Revelations* of his Will, and strengthened with the Sanction of *Rewards and Punishments*; but by *Example* also upon perpetual Record, of some *Nation, Family*, or very eminent *Person*, adhering singly to the Worship of the One True God, and to the Religion built upon That Only Foundation; to *enlighten* the World, as it were by a Light *shining in a dark place*, and continually reminding them of the *Truth* they have departed from: Calling upon them (in the *Prophets* expression) by a *Standard lift up unto the Nations*, and by an *Ensign on a Hill*; or (according to *our Saviour's* Similitude) by a *City built upon a Hill*, which cannot

be hid; and by a *Light set on a Candlestick, which giveth Light unto all that are in the House.* Of This kind, was a *Succession of Families* Before the Flood; and the Family of *Noah*, and of *Melchisedec* and *Job*, and perhaps some *Others* also, and the *Patriarchs* After the Flood. Of the same sort, was the Nation of the *Jews*, even notwithstanding all their particular Corruptions, *before* the Coming of Christ: And *since* That Time, such also has been the *Christian Church*; in which, notwithstanding the Greatest and most Universal Corruptions, still *the Pearl of great Price, the Principles of Truth and Virtue*, have always more or less shined forth, in *some* particular Places at least, as a Light appearing through a very thick *Mist*. But that which my *present Subject* confines me to, is the *single Example of Abraham*: *Abraham believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for Righteousness.*

If it be here inquired, with regard to *This Method* in the Proceedings of Providence; *whence* it comes to pass that the *Light of Divine Truth*, and the *Manifestations* God has been pleased to make of himself to Mankind, have not been more

Serm. *general and universal*: The Answer is;
 XI. that though in *This*, and indeed in all

~ Other Cases whatsoever, we know not
in particular the manifold distinct Reasons
 of God's Manner of acting; as indeed
 'tis impossible we should; yet *in general*
 'tis manifest, that *This* Disposition of things
 is according to the *Analogy* of God's usual
 Method of acting in all *Other* Cases.
 It has seem'd good to infinite Wisdom to
 shew forth itself, as in forming an un-
 speakable *Variety* of *Other* Beings of
 All Kinds, so in creating particularly a
 great *Diversity* of *Rational* Creatures,
 of Angels and Men; endowed with ve-
 ry *different Capacities*, intrusted in
 numberless Instances with very *different*
Talents, instructed with very *different*
degrees of *Light and Knowledge*; so as
 to be Each of them capable of being
 called to *Account*, of being *judged* ac-
 cording to their respective *Abilities*, ac-
 cording to the *Measure* and *Degree* of
 their respective *Knowledge*, according to
 the Nature of their several *Stations*, and
 of the *Talents* in innumerable different
 Circumstances committed to their Trust.
 The Case therefore *here* is the *very same*,
 even in respect of *Natural Reason* itself,
 as of other *more particular* Manifesta-
 tions

tions of the Divine Pleasure. Both the *One* and the *Other* have shined forth, only in particular *Places*, and at particular *Times*, in different *Degrees*; as *Lights* sufficient to direct such as were sincerely desirous of finding out and following the Truth; and to be a *Testimony* against *Others*, who neither liked to retain their *Natural Knowledge* of God, nor cared to be instructed in his *Will Revealed*. But This, by the way.

Serm.
XI.

The *Faith* of *Abraham*, so highly magnified in Scripture, and which (the Text tells us) was counted to him for *Righteousness*, evidenced itself principally in *Two* remarkable Instances. The *One* was, his leaving his Native Country at the Command of God, separating himself from the idolatrous Nations around him, and going into a strange Land; firmly believing that God was *Faithful*, who had promised that his posterity should inherit That Land; and that from *Him*, even when as good as dead, there should spring so many as the Stars of the Sky in multitude, and as the Sand which is by the Sea-shore innumerable, Heb. xi, 12. The *Other* Instance was, that when he was tried, he offered up his only Son, in 17.

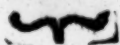
Heb. xi.

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whom

Serm. whom alone seemed to center All the
 XI. Promises God had made him; Thus even

~ *Against Hope* (as St Paul most elegantly expresses it,) *believing IN Hope*; and *being fully perswaded, that what God had promised, who quickneth the Dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were, he was able also to perform*, Rom. iv; 17, 18, 21. The Excellency of This Faith, in Both These Instances, consisted in *This*; that it was a *Principle of Virtue or Obedience to God*, built upon *This* Foundation; that God who ruleth over All, can and will certainly make good, either in the *Present* or in a *Future* State, all the Expectations raised in the Minds of Virtuous and Good men, either by the *Natural Knowledge* of his Divine Attributes, or by the *Revealed Declarations* of his Will. And *This* the Apostle, in Each of the forementioned Cases, expressly declares. In the case of *Abraham's offering up his Son*, the ground he tells us the Patriarch went upon, was his Perswasion, that Death itself puts not an end to the Possibilities of the Divine Favour; but that God was able to make good the Promises given to Him and his Son, even by a Resurrection from the Dead, *Heb. xi*,



19. In the *Other* case, That of the Patriarchs separating himself from the idolatrous Nations, and going into a strange country; the Apostle *Thus* expresses the Ground and Foundation, on which his Faith was built. *Heb. xi, 8, By Faith Abraham, when he was called to go out to a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. And he journeyed in the Land of Promise, as in a strange Country;-----For he looked for the City which hath Foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God. And what that City was, the same Apostle distinctly explains, ver. 14, speaking of Abraham and his Posterity: They that say such things, (viz. confessing that they were strangers and Pilgrims on the Earth,) declare plainly that they seek a Country: And truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned: But Now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called Their God; for he hath prepared for them a City.* 'Tis evident therefore that the Faith of Abraham, was a Principle of Virtue or Obedience to God, founded upon the

Ex-

Serm. *Expectation of a Future State.* And
 XI. because he *Thus believed God*, therefore
 'twas counted to *HIM*; And to *All*
Others likewise in All Generations, who
 shall be governed, as *He* was, by their
Belief in God; to *Them* also it shall be
 counted for *Righteousness*.

From *This* explication of the Nature
 and *Excellency* of the *Faith* of *Abra-*
ham, there may be drawn some very con-
 siderable *general Observations*, of great
 Extent and Consequence in the Notion
 and Practice of true Religion. As

1st. From hence we may observe
 that *True Faith* is always founded upon
Reason. *Abraham* believed, *What*
why, that God would certainly make good
 to *Him* and his *Posterity*, every thing
 that he had promised. And *Why* did he
 believe *This*? *Why*, because *Reason* told
 him, that, whatever *Improbabilities* ap-
 peared at present; yet God, who has
 Power over the *Future* as well as the *Pre-*
sent State, was able to fulfil his Promise
 even by a *Resurrection from the Dead*.
 This the Apostle *expressly* observes
 upon That difficult Tryal of his offer-
 ing up his Son, *Heb. xi, 19, He* at
 counted

counted, that God was able to raise him
up, even from the Dead; from whence
also he had received him in a Figure. He
Accounted: The word in the Original is,
λογισάμενος,) he Reasoned with himself: His
Reason satisfied him, that the Power of
God could as easily raise again his Son
from the Dead, as it had at first caused
him to be Born from one as good as Dead.
He had Before received him as it were
from the Dead in a Figure, by his being
born to him in an extreme old Age; And
Now he doubted not, but God could li-
terally restore him from the Dead again.
This was a Faith, truly founded upon
Reason. And no less Reasonable is it
in US to believe Now, that the same
Divine Power which at first created men
into the present Life, can as easily renew
them into a Life to come. In This, there
is nothing contrary to the Dictates of
Right Reason, or to the Analogy of Na-
ture. How different from This, is the
Practise of Those, who, under pretense
of the Divine Omnipotence, require men
to profess their Belief of Contradictions;
such as is Transubstantiation, and the like,
and all other Natural or Moral Impossi-
bilities. For, to ascribe to the Divine
Power things that are not at all the Ob-
jects

Serm. *jects of Power*, and to suppose that God

XI. *makes* things to be what at the same he
 does *not make* them to be; is not *magnifying* the Power of God, but profanely making a *Mockery* of it. *True Faith* therefore, is always founded upon *Reason*. And as, in all *Other Cases*, the Strength of *every Superstructure* is proportionable to the Goodness of the *Foundation* on which it is built: So in matters of *Religion*, the *Steddiness* of every man's *Virtue* is always proportionable to the *Firmness* of his *Belief* of the Principles he acts upon; And the *Stability* of this *Belief*, in opposition to a careless and negligent *Credulity*, will always be found, upon any difficult Tryal, to be in proportion as 'tis more or less *Reasonably* grounded. For *This cause* it is, that our Saviour so highly commends the Faith of the *Centurion*, who from the Analogy of his *own* being a *man under Authority*, and having *Soldiers under him*, reasoned himself into a Perswasion that *Jesus* also was able to heal his Servant, *without coming himself in Person* to visit him: *Verily*, says our Lord, *I have not found so great Faith, no, not in Israel*, Matt. viii, 10. And in like manner concerning the *Canaanitish* woman, who from the

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Similitude of the *dogs eating the Crumbs* that fall from their Masters Table, argued reasonably that She, though a Stranger from the common-wealth of *Israel*, yet needed not wholly to despair of our Lord's Favour; *O woman*, says he, *great is thy Faith*, Matt. xv, 28. Upon the same ground *the Jews*, who could judge well enough about *Other* things, and argue reasonably about the Tokens of the *Sky* and the *Weather*, and make proper Observations in the course of the *Natural* World; but had no discernment at all, in matters of *Religion*; are thus reprov'd by our Lord, *Luke* xii, 57, *Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?* On the contrary, the *Bereans*, who search'd the *Scriptures* carefully, to see *what* reason there might be for their embracing the Doctrine preach'd by the Apostles; are commended thereupon, as being of a more noble and generous temper, *Acts* xvii, 11. And *St Paul*, arguing to the *Corinthians* concerning a very important Point of Christian Doctrine; *I speak* (says he) *as to Wise men, judge ye what I say*, 1 Cor. x, 15. This therefore is the First Observation, naturally arising from the foregoing Discourse: viz. that *True Faith*, is always founded upon *Reason*.

2dly

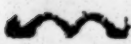
Serm.

XI.

2dly. A *second* Observation is, that *True Faith* in God, never leads men to the Practice of any thing, that is essentially and in its own nature *Immoral*. Of this sort are the *Idolatries* practis'd in the Church of *Rome*, fundamentally destructive of all both Natural and Revealed Notions of God. Of the same Kind are the *Cruelties* and *Barbarities* perpetually practis'd by them, fundamentally destructive of all Virtue towards Men, and of the very essential, eternal, and unalterable Differences of Good and Evil Things established by the *mere positive Command* even of God himself, may without controversy, be *changed* by the same Authority that appointed them. Further: Things contrary to *That part* even of the *Law of Nature it self*, which is founded originally in the *Will of God* and not in the *Necessary and Essential Nature of Things*; may be done, upon particular and extraordinary occasions, by the immediate and express Command of God. But *That part* of the Law of Nature, which is founded, not on *Will*, but on the very *Existence of God*, and on the *essentially and eternally immutable Nature and Relation of Things*; This

No Circumstances capable of any Variation. For instance: That the Life of an innocent person should be taken away by the Authority of any Power upon Earth, contrary to the *Law of Nature*. Nevertheless, since the Right which even an Innocent person has to his life, is not founded in the *essential* Nature of Things, but merely in the *Will* and *Free Gift* of God; 'tis plain *He* may as justly appoint to be taken away by any *Other* means he pleases, as by a *Fever* or a *Pestilence*. But had God commanded *Abraham* to forsake the Worship of *Himself*, and turn to *Idols*; Or had he commanded him to *Hate* his blameless Son, or to take *Delight* in *Cruelty*, *Barbarity*, and *Tyranny*; the Command had been, in its nature, *impossible* and *absurd*. Again: The seven wicked Nations of *Canaan* might, by a *particular* and *immediate* Command of God, as justly be extirpated by the Sword of the *Israelites*, as by an Earthquake, or (like *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*) by Lightning from Heaven. But that, *without* any *immediate* and *express* Command, and under a *general* Pretence of being Alone Possessors of the *Truth*, perpetual *tyrannical Enmity* should be carried on against *virtuous* men of All Na-

Serm. Nations, and a Power established of changing even the *Nature of Virtue and Vice*.

XI.  This is a Wickedness which never had an Equal; and subverts fundamentally even *That part of the Law of Nature* which is founded, not on the *Will*, but on the very *Being of God*, and on the *necessary, essential, and eternal Difference of Good and Evil*.

3dly. The *Third and Last* Observation I would here make, is; that *Faith* when spoken of in Scripture as a Moral Virtue, never signifies *mere Belief*; but always includes in it a Notion of *Fidelity* or *Faithfulness*; a *Faithful and Steadfast Adherence* to such *Principles*, even in times of the greatest Danger and Difficulty, as are the *Foundation or Ground of Virtue and Obedience*. *Abraham* believed *God*; (he had *Faith* or *Fidelity* towards *God*; *adhered firmly* to his *Principles*, and *acted steddily* upon them, in matters even of the greatest Tryal and Difficulty: He *kept the Faith*, as *St Paul* speaks concerning *Himself*; or, as the same Apostle elsewhere expresses it, he *kept That which was committed to His Charge*;) *And Therefore it was counted unto him for Righteousness*: It was reckoned

reckoned to him, it was *allowed to him* Sermon.
in his Account, (so the word is in the O- XI.
 riginal;) not, *INSTEAD* of *Righteousness*, but as being *itself real Righteousness*. This matter is rightly represented by the Author of the Book of *Ecclus. ch, xliv, 19, Abraham was a great Father of many people; in glory was there None like unto him: Who kept the Law of the most High, and was in Covenant with him;----- and when he was proved, he was found Faithful: Therefore he assured him by an Oath, that he would bless the Nations in his Seed, and that he would multiply him as the Dust of the Earth, and exalt his Seed as the Stars, and cause them to inherit from Sea to Sea, and from the River unto the utmost part of the Land.* And from hence 'tis very evident *what* the Writers of the New Testament intend, when they declare to us that *Abraham*, though he *was not justified by the Works of the Law*, such as *circumcision* and the like, because This Testimony was given of him *before* he was circumcised; yet the *Faith* by which he *WAS justified*, was an active and steady *Principle of Works of Righteousness*: And by That *Faith* was he *therefore* justified, because it was a *Faith which wrought* Jam. ii. 22.
 S with

Serm *with his works, and by works was his*

XI. *Faith made perfect.* And the Application they make of it to *Us*, is; that *They*, and *They only*, who walk in the steps of the *Faith of Abraham*, are, in the religious estimation, *Abraham's Seed*. That is; *They only* shall finally be accepted of God, whose *Faith* is, like His, a *Real Principle of Virtue and Obedience*. Otherwise; it matters little, *whose Name* we are called by, or *whose religion* we profess. For, unless we bring forth *Fruits meet for Repentance*; God is able even of *these Stones*, sooner than of impenitent and incorrigible Sinners, to raise up *Children unto Abraham*; and unto *Christ*.



A
S E R M O N

Preach'd in the
PARISH-CHURCH
O F
St James's Westminster,

On *Sunday, May 3, 1719.*

J O H. VI. 35.

Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of Life. He that cometh to Me, shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me, shall never thirst.

AS in *All Discourses whatsoever*, Sermon.
there is no possibility of under- XII.
standing the Sense of what is spo-
ken, without understanding the Language in
which That Sense is delivered; So in *Scripture* particularly, unless men attend to the
Nature of the expressions therein used, and

Serm. consider the Figures of Speech, which at
 XII. the time when those Books were written,
 ~~~~~ were as common and well-known, as modern Forms of speaking are at this day: Unless This (I say) be considered, there is no Doctrine so absurd, but may be proved from the *Words* of Scripture, without regard to the *Sense*; and No doctrine so clear, but may be darkned with Scraps of Scripture-expressions, applied contrary to the Design and Connexion of the whole Discourse. Thus, for Instance, God's *granting Repentance* to Sinners, that is, *granting* them the Favour of having their Repentance and Amendment accepted instead of perfect Obedience; has sometimes been understood in such a manner, as if God *worked Repentance in or upon them*, as a *Workman* operates upon a *Machine*. Thus, God's declaring the *Christian* Church, instead of the *Jewish* Church, to be for the future his *Elect* people; has been thought a Proof of his having chosen *particular persons* absolutely and unconditionally to *Salvation*. Thus, the Promise of eternal Life to them that *believe*; though the Scripture in numberless places declares, that thereby is meant *The Obedience* which proceedeth from Faith; has yet  
 been

been perverted to signify mere *Credulity*, a mere *Profession* of Religion, mere *Zeal* for *particular Parties*, *Doctrines* or *Opinions*. And the *Hope of Pardon* to Them that *truly Repent* and *reform their manners*, purchased by the Blood of Christ; has been turned into a *Superstitious Reliance upon the Merits of Christ*, to supply the *Want of Repentance and Amendment of Life*. Again: The Power of *Preaching the Gospel*, and the Command to *Teach all Nations* upon *What Terms* their Sins should be forgiven them; has been made a Foundation for a *Pretense* to a *Power of forgiving Sins*, upon *Other Terms* than those of true Repentance and Amendment of Life. And, to mention but One Instance more; Our Saviour's stiling himself the *Bread of Life*, giving his *Flesh for the Life of the World*, and saying concerning the Sacramental Memorial of his Death, *This is my Body*; though the *very same Figure of Speech* is used in numberless other places of Scripture; and though our Saviour himself expressly admonishes us in the Instance of *This very Figure*, Joh. vi, 63, *It is the Spirit that quickneth, the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are*

Serm.  
XII.



Serm. *Life* ; yet how often have these passages  
 XII. been alledged as Proofs of *Transubstan-*  
 ~~~~~ *tiation*, of the *Sacrifice of the Mass*, of  
 the *Adoration of the Host*, and of Other
 monstrous *Confusions* in the Worship of
 God ! Against This Evil, there is No other
 possible *Remedy*, but studying the *Scripture*
itself carefully and sincerely ; in or-
 der to find out the real *Sense and Mean-*
ing, instead of abusing the *Words* of it.
 Other Means of discovering the Truth
 in these cases, there *Can be None*. *Tra-*
dition, is but a *Fiction* and a *Spectre*.
Opinions of Men, are *Nothing* ; being
 infinitely *contradictory* to each other ;
mutable as the Successions of *Ages*, and
various as the different *Climates* and *Na-*
tions of the Earth. Only with this Dif-
 ference ; that at *Rome* a *tyrannical De-*
spite of *Truth*, and a *Contempt* of *in-*
quiring after it, is Greater than ever was
 in any other place ; Greater in Degree,
 and Larger in Extent ; more authorita-
 tive, more wicked, and more absurd.
 But if men would use the *Scripture* as
 they do other Books, studying it without
 prejudice, looking for the Doctrine of
 Christ *in* it, and not bringing with them
 their *Opinions before* they read it ; the
Sense of Scripture would be found within
 itself.

itself. *Search the Scripture*, was our Saviour's Direction to the Jews, *Joh. v. 39.* Serm. XII.
 And the *Reason* is given by St Paul, *2 Tim. iii. 16, 'Tis profitable for Doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

The Discourse of our Saviour in this *Sixth* chapter of *St John*, whereof my Text is a part; is a most remarkable Instance and Proof of what I have now said. Never was any thing more unreasonable, than the Use which has sometimes been made of such of our Lord's expressions as these which follow. *Labour for That MEAT, which endureth unto everlasting life, v. 27. The BREAD of God, is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the World, v. 33. I am the Bread of Life; He that cometh to Me, shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me, shall never thirst, v. 35, The Bread that I will give, is my Flesh which I will give for the life of the World, v. 51. Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you, v. 53. And, v. 58, he that eateth of this bread, shall live*

S 4

for

Serm. *for ever.* Nothing, I say, can be more
 XII. unreasonable, than the Use which has
 sometimes been made, and That by Great
 Authorities too, of these Expressions of
 our Saviour. And yet, if we look over
 the whole Scripture, and consider the
 Phrases of this kind, that frequently oc-
 cur in reading; 'twill be surprizing to ob-
 serve, in how *usual* and *frequent*, in how
expressive and *elegant*, in how *natural*
 and *obvious* a manner, the very *same* fi-
 gure of Sppeech is made use of, upon a
multitude of occasions. In the following
 Discourse therefore upon these words of
 our Lord, (*I am the Bread of Life: He
 that cometh to me, shall never hunger;
 and he that believeth on Me, shall never
 thirst:*) I shall 1st indeavour, from the
 whole Tenour and Phraseology of Scrip-
 ture, to explain the Doctrine here laid
 down; and to give an account of the par-
 ticular Figure of Speech, in which it is ex-
 pressed. And 2^{dly}, I shall make some
 Observations thereupon, and Inferences
 from it.

I. In order to explain the Doctrine here
 laid down, and to give an account of the
 particular Figure of Speech in which our
 Lord has expressed it; 'tis to be observed,
 that

that as the *Happiness of Heaven*, and the *Final Favour of God*, is by the inspired Serm. XII.

Writers represented under the character of *LIFE*, and *Everlasting Life*; so, in the present time here upon *Earth*, the *State or Habit of Virtue*, is the *HEALTH* of the *Soul*; And every degree of *instruction in the Knowledge of Truth*, and every *Act of righteousness*, every degree of *improvement in virtuous Practise*, is *FOOD* and *NOURISHMENT*.

On the contrary, *Sin* is in Scripture spoken of as a *Disease or Sickness*; Is. i, 4, *Oh sinful Nation, a people laden with iniquity;-----the whole Head is SICK, and the whole Heart faint.* And a *HABIT of Wickedness*, is elegantly set forth as being, in a *spiritual sense*, the *DEATH* of the *Soul*; Eph. ii, 1, *You who were DEAD in trespasses and Sins.* A *Reformation or recovery* from such a State, is described as a *Resurrection from the dead*; Eph. 2, 4, *God who is rich in mercy, even when we were Dead in Sins, hath QUICKENED us* (that is, raised us to *Life*,) *together with Christ.* And Every degree of *Improvement in the Knowledge of Truth and Right*, is, as it were the *Support, Nourishment, and Sustenance*, of a *rational and virtuous Mind*. Deut. xxxii, 2, *My*

Serm. 2, *My Doctrine shall drop as the Rain*
 XII. *my Speech shall distill as the Dew; as the*
 ~~~~~ *small rain upon the tender herb, and as*  
*the showers upon the Grass. And Job*  
*xxix, 22, Unto Me, men gave ear; ----- and*  
*my Speech dropped upon them: They*  
*waited for me, as for the rain; and they*  
*opened their mouth wide as for the latter*  
*rain.* To One who considers these and  
 the like expressions, nothing can be more  
 natural and obvious than our Saviour's  
 way of speaking in the Gospel after the  
 same manner: *Job. vii, 37, If any man*  
*thirst, let him come unto me, and drink*  
 If any man has probity of mind to receive  
 instruction, and is desirous to understand  
 the Truth, let him attend to the Doctrine  
 of the Gospel. The same invitation is  
 repeated, *Rev. xxi, 6; xxii, 17, I will*  
*give unto him that is athirst, of the*  
*fountain of the water of life freely. The*  
*Spirit and the Bride say, Come; and let*  
*him that heareth, say, Come; and let*  
*him that is athirst, come; And whoso-*  
*ever will, let him take the Water of Life*  
*freely.* In the prophet *Isaiab, ch. lv, 1,*  
 the same Figure is carried still further:  
*Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to*  
*the Waters; ----- come ye, buy and eat;*  
*yea, buy wine and milk without money,*  
 and

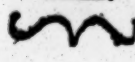
and without price;----Hearken diligent-  
unto Me, and eat ye that which is  
good, and let your Soul delight itself in  
righteousness: Incline your ear, and come un-  
to Me; hear, and your Soul shall live.  
and Prov. ix, 3; *Wisdom*, (that is, the  
doctrine of Virtue and true religion, of  
the Fear of God and the practice of Right-  
eousness; This wisdom) *crieth upon the*  
*highest places of the City: Whoso is sim-*  
*ple, let him turn in hither; As for him*  
*that wanteth understanding, she saith to*  
*him, Come eat of my Bread, and drink*  
*of the Wine which I have mingled; For-*  
*sake the foolish, and live; and go in the*  
*way of understanding.* There was No  
Jew in the days of the old Testament,  
but perfectly understood the Sense of these  
beautiful and expressive Figures of Speech;  
And they are Now as obvious and as plain  
to be apprehended, (in all cases where  
Prejudice and Interest do not interpose,)  
as the most Modern Forms of speaking.  
Hence a sincere Desire of knowing and  
doing the Will of God, an unprejudiced  
Love of Truth, and an uncorrupt pursu-  
ing of what is Right; is by our Saviour  
called *Hungring and Thirsting after Right-*  
*eousness*, Matt. v, 6. And the perfection  
of his Own Practice, is most emphatically  
set



Serm. set forth in the following expreffion, Job  
 XII. iv, 34, *My MEAT*, faith he, *is to do the*  
 Will of him that sent me, and to finish his  
 Work. In the Book of Job it is, ch. xxiii, 12  
*I have not gone back from the commandment*  
*of his Lips; I have esteemed the words of*  
*his Mouth, more than my necessary Food*  
 And in Jeremiah, thus; ch. xv, 16, *The*  
*words were found, and I did EAT them;*  
*thy word was unto me the Joy and Re-*  
*joicing of mine heart.* On the contrary, con-  
 cerning those who *delight in Wickedness*  
 and *take pleasure in Unrighteousness*, 'tis  
 affirmed in Scripture, that *the Soul of the*  
*Transgressor EATETH violence, and*  
*DRINKETH up Scorning* (or iniquity)  
*like water;* Job xxxiv, 7; xv, 16; Prov  
 xiii, 2. And Any peculiar extraordinary  
 corruption in the Doctrine or general  
 Practise of any particular Party of men  
 is stiled *The Leaven of Those Men*, or  
 of That Vice: Matt. xvi; 11, 12, *I spake*  
*not to you concerning BREAD, that ye*  
*should beware of the LEAVEN of the*  
*Pharisees,-----but of the DOCTRINE*  
*of the Pharisees,-----which* (Luke xii, 1,  
*is Hypocrisy.* And 1 Cor. v, 8, *Not with*  
*the LEAVEN of Malice and Wicked-*  
*ness, but with the UNLEAVENED*  
*BREAD of Sincerity and Truth.* By

the same figure of Speech, the *Elements* Sermon.  
the first plain and fundamental Prin- XII.  
ples or Instructions of *Christianity*, are  
the *sincere MILK of the word*,  
Pet. ii, 2; and 1 Cor. iii. 2. And a  
more perfect or improved Knowledge in  
the Doctrines of the Gospel, is, according  
to St Paul's description, *strong MEAT*,  
belonging to them that are of full age,  
even those who by reason of Use have  
their Senses exercised to discern both Good  
and Evil, Heb. v, 14. The imbibing,  
digesting, and practising these Precepts of  
true Religion, is, in Our Saviour's lan-  
guage, the *MEAT which indureth unto*  
*everlasting Life*, Joh. vi, 27. And ch.  
vi, 14, 'tis the *WATER, which whoso-*  
*ever drinketh of, shall never thirst*; but  
it shall be in him a *Well of Water, spring-*  
*ing up into everlasting Life*. To per-  
sons not conversant in the Scripture-lan-  
guage, 'tis no wonder that such Phrases as  
these, seem strange and not easy to be un-  
derstood. But from the passages before-  
cited out of the Old Testament, 'tis ap-  
parent they were very *common* figures of  
Speech among the *Jews*; and consequent-  
ly ought to be interpreted according to That  
Analogy. In the Book of *Ecclesiasticus*  
particularly, there is a Passage which gives  
fin-

Serm. singular Light to the whole Discourse of  
 XII. our Saviour, whereof my Text is a part

 Ch. xxiv, 19, Wisdom is introduced, saying, *Come unto me, all ye that be desirous of me, and fill yourselves with my Fruits. For my Memorial is sweeter than Hony, and mine inheritance than the hony-Comb. They that EAT me shall yet be hungry; and they that DRINK me, shall yet be thirsty. He that obeyeth me, shall never be confounded and they that work by me, shall not do amiss. All these things are the Book of the covenant of the Most High God. The Phrases; they that eat me, shall yet be hungry; and they that drink me, shall yet be thirsty; signify, in a lively and most elegant manner of expression, that the Pleasure arising from the Knowledge of Truth and from the Practise of Virtue, is a Pleasure always New, always satisfying, and of which a man can never be weary. The Phrase used by our Saviour in the Text, (he that cometh to me, shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me, shall never thirst;) though it be very different in the construction, yet the Allusion is plainly the very same, and the Sense not at all unlike: Whosoever embraceth My doctrine, and obeys my instructions, shall never*



ever *WANT* any thing necessary to his *Serm.*  
*Eternal Happiness*; seeing he has the *XII.*  
*Means which will more certainly sup-*  
*port him unto everlasting Life, than*  
*Meat and Drink maintains and nourishes*  
*the Body in this mortal State.*

This being once carefully observed,  
 there remains No further difficulty in un-  
 derstanding our Saviour's Whole Discourse  
 through this chapter. His calling himself  
 the *Bread of Life* in the Text, and in *ver.*  
*53*; the *Living Bread*, *ver. 51*; and the  
*Bread which cometh down from Heaven*,  
*ver. 50 & 58*; plainly signifies This on-  
 ly; that the Belief and consequent Pra-  
 ise of the Doctrine of the Gospel, is the  
 Support and Preserver of the Soul unto  
 eternal life. His saying, *ver. 57, He that*  
*EATETH me, shall live by me*; is clear-  
 ly explained by the words of Wisdom,  
*Eccles. xxiv, 21, They that EAT*  
*me, shall yet be hungry*: And by our  
 Lord's own words in the Text, *He that*  
*COMETH to me, shall never hunger*;  
*and he that BELIEVETH on me,*  
*shall never thirst*: Where the words,  
*coming to him and believing on him*, ap-  
 pear evidently, by the words *hunger* and  
*thirst*, with which they are joined, to be  
 ex-

Serm. explicatory of what in the 57th verse is  
 XIII. stiled *Eating*. And his explaining him-  
 self, ver. 29, 40, & 47, manifestly shows  
 the same thing: *This* (says he) *is the*  
*work of God, that ye BELIEVE*  
*Him whom he has sent:-----This is the*  
*Will of him that sent me, that every one*  
*which seeth the Son and BELIEVETH*  
*on him, may have everlasting Life:-----*  
*Verily I say unto you, He that BE-*  
*LIEVETH on me, hath everlasting*  
*Life; I am That Bread of Life.* There  
 remains only *One phrase more* in the  
 chapter, wherein the *same figure* of Speech  
 is carried still further; Our Lord in the  
 51<sup>st</sup> and 53<sup>d</sup> and following Verses, set-  
 ting forth the *same thing* under the still  
 higher figure of *eating his Flesh* and  
*drinking his Blood*, which, in the Text  
 and in several other verses of this Chap-  
 ter, he had before expressed by stiling him-  
 self *The Bread of Life*. But *This* also  
 when that which has been already said be-  
 well understood, will have no great difficul-  
 ty in it. For as, in the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter of  
 this Gospel, our Lord expresses the spiri-  
 tual Union between him and his disci-  
 ples in the following manner, ver. 5,  
*I am the Vine, and ye are the Branches*  
*He that abideth in Me, and I in Him*

the same bringeth forth much Fruit: Sermon,  
And as St Paul, without Any danger of XII.  
being misunderstood, sets forth the same  
notion still more sublimely Thus, *Eph. v,*  
*30, We are Members of his Body, of his*  
*Flesh and of his Bones:* So in the place  
before us, after our Lord's styling himself  
the *Bread of Life*, in the same sense as  
*Wisdom* in the Book of *Ecclesiasticus*  
says concerning herself, *They that EAT*  
*me, shall yet be hungry*; there cannot,  
without great perverseness, be put a wrong  
Sense upon what he adds, *ver. 56, He*  
*that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my*  
*blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.*  
For, Why should not what our Lord calls  
*eating his flesh and drinking his blood,*  
be as easily understood of our *imbibing* and  
*digesting* his Doctrine, converting it by  
way of spiritual Nourishment into the ve-  
ry Habit of our Mind, and into the Pra-  
ctise of our Lives; as *St Paul* is by All  
men, even of the meanest capacities, un-  
derstood without any difficulty to speak in  
a spiritual and figurative Sense, when he  
says of all good Christians, that they are  
*Members of Christ's Body, of his Flesh*  
*and of his Bones?*



Serm.

XII.

II. Having thus from the whole Tenour and Phrascology of Scripture, explained the *doctrine* laid down in the Text, and given an account of the particular *figure of Speech* wherein it is expressed: It remains in the *second* place, that I briefly make some Observations thereupon, and Inferences from it. And

1<sup>st</sup>. From what has been said, it appears, that in this whole Discourse of our Saviour in *this* sixth chapter of *St John's* Gospel, there is no mention at all made of the *Eucharist* or *Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*. The Discourse was spoken by our Saviour, *long before* the institution of That Sacrament: And therefore it could never have been applied by Any to That Subject, had they not thought the Phrases of *eating his Flesh* and *drinking his Blood*, incapable of being explained to any other Sense. But from the many Passages both of the Old and New Testament, which I have now alledged to This purpose, 'tis evident that those Phrases, in the Jewish language and manner of speaking, do very easily signify, the *receiving* and *imbibing*, the *digesting* and

and *practising* a *Doctrine*: And that the only reason why our Lord was misunderstood by many that heard him, was That Dullness in Some, and That *Perverseness* in Others, arising from unreasonable *Prejudices*, which we find him so often complaining of in the Gospel.

Serm.  
XII.

2dly. If the *Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*, is not at all spoken of in *this* chapter; then *much less* can any Argument be drawn from any expression therein, in favour of the Romish Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*. Receiving and *im-bibing*, *digesting* and practising his *Doctrine*; is what our Lord here calls, *eating his flesh* and *drinking his Blood*. And 'tis called so by the *like* figure of Speech, though without any *Reference* to each other in This place,) as is used indeed in the Sacrament of the *Lord's Supper*, and in That of *Baptism* too. The *Bread* and *Wine*, are not themselves literally the *Body and Blood of Christ*; But the *outward* thing *signified* by those *outward* Symbols, is the *Body and Blood of Christ*: Just as, in the Sacrament of *Baptism*, the being immersed in *Water*, is not itself the *Death and Burial of Christ*, but only an *outward* Sign; the *outward* thing *signified whereby*, is the being

Serm. *buried with Christ in his Death.* And  
 XII. the *Body and Blood of Christ*, is verily  
 ~~~~~ and indeed taken and received by the Faith-  
 ful in the Lord's Supper; just in the same
 manner, as Persons baptized do verily
 and indeed *Die and are Buried with*
Christ. No man ever was so absurd, as
 to understand the *One* literally; and there
 is no more Reason to understand the *O-*
ther so: But by *Both*, men are intitl'd,
 if they be worthy Receivers, to the spi-
 ritual Benefits purchased by Christ's Death.

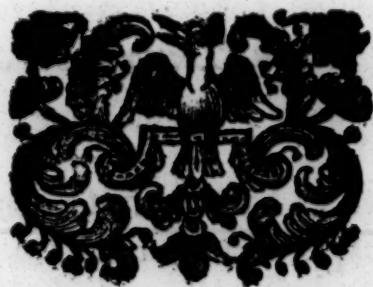
3dly. From hence we may learn in ge-
 neral, how to understand many Other
 metaphorical expressions in Scripture.
 After the same manner of speaking, as
 Christ is here stiled The *BREAD* of Life;
 he is elsewhere stiled The *WAY* and the
Life, the *RESURRECTION* and the
Life, the *Door* and the *Vine*. He is
 called the *Word*, and the *Wisdom*, and
 the *Power* of *GOD*; and he is called
The Righteousness (or *Justification*) of
MEN. He and the *Father*, are affirm-
 ed to be *One*; And of *Paul* and *Apol-*
los 'tis said, *He that planteth, and he*
that watereth, are One. The *Eucharist*
 is spoken of, as a *Sacrifice*; And *Praise*
 is expressly called a *Sacrifice*; And the *Bo-*
 dies

dies of Christians, are stiled *holy and living Sacrifices*: for *no other* reason, but because these things, in the *Christian* institution, *succeeded* in the *place* of the *Sacrifices* which had been offered among the *Jews*. And therefore when some ancient Christian Writers stile the *Eucharist* an *unbloody Sacrifice*; modern Writers, who understand this phrase in a *literal* sense, are just as absurd, as if they should understand *St Paul* literally, when he calls Christians *The CIRCUMCISION without hands*; By which *He* plainly means nothing more, but that the *Christian Church* succeeded in the place of the *Jewish*, who had in the *literal* sense been stiled *The Circumcision*. And by the *same* figure of Speech; because God, who had formerly chosen *Jerusalem* to place his Name there, has Now declared that he will be worshipped in *All* places alike; therefore the whole World has sometimes been elegantly stiled, *The TEMPLE of God*; And *Every Man*, and *Every Moral Duty*, is a *Sacrifice* acceptable to him,

Serm.
XII.

4. *Lastly*: Since these and the like *figurative* expressions, contain *Always* in them a *moral* meaning and signification,

Serm. we ought carefully to observe, that in
 XII. *this their Moral meaning* only, can they
 ever be of any *Use* to us. *The flesh,*
 Joh. vi, 63. *saith our Blessed Saviour, profiteth no-*
thing; The words that I speak unto you,
they are Spirit and they are Life. The
 Participation of the *Sacrament*, without
 true *Faith*; is *Bread*, without the *Body*
of Christ. *Faith* itself, without *Obe-*
dience; is (as *St James* expresses it,) a
Body without Soul or Life. *Relying on*
the Merits of Christ, without *doing the Will*
of his Father which is in Heaven; can
 be of no more *Use* to us, than the *Death*
of Christ would have been, if there had
 never been any *Resurrection.* All great
 Corruptions of Religion in all Ages, have
 arisen by separating the Letter thus from
 the Spirit; And in amending This Fault
 lies the principal efficacy of true Virtue
 and Goodness.



A
S E R M O N

Preach'd in the
PARISH-CHURCH
O F

St James's Westminster,

On Sunday, Dec. 15, 1723.

ECCLES. VII, 29.

*Lo, This only have I found, that God
hath made Man upright ; but They
have sought out many Inventions.*

TIS, not only at this day, the greatest and most difficult Question among *Christians* ; but it was so of old among the *Jews* under the Law ; and, beyond *That*, even among the *Wiser Heathens* also, under the State of Nature ; *How Sin and Misery came first into the*

Serm. 7
XIII.

Serm. *World*: How *Man*, whose rational Facul-
 XIII. ties seem naturally to lead him to discern
 ~~~~~ and choose what is *good*, yet in Event for  
 the greater part has his Understanding so  
 blinded and apt to be deceived, his Will so  
 biaſſed and inclined to evil, his Appetites  
 so corrupt and perpetually tempting him  
 to forbidden Objects; his Passions so ungo-  
 vernable, and unwilling to submit to Rea-  
 son; that if a judgment was to be made,  
 not from the *Faculties* of men, but from  
 their *Actions* only; if we were to take our  
 Estimate, not from the Obligations of our  
*Nature*, but from the Experience of mens  
*Practice*; it might be imagined that,  
 not *Virtue*, but *Vice*, was natural to  
 Mankind, and the proper Effect of their  
 Original Composition. For otherwise;  
 if *originally* God made men *upright*,  
 and *Virtue* was naturally most agreea-  
 ble to their Frame; how then was it  
*possible* (will it be obvious to ask,) that  
 they could almost universally *seek out*  
 so many evil *Inventions*? And if the *In-*  
*ventions* they have sought out, are so  
 many and so evil, that they can hardly be  
 conceived to arise but from something  
 faulty in their very *Nature*; how then  
 can it be comprehended, that God never-  
 theless created them *originally upright*? If

If *God* be perfectly *Good*, (as perfect Goodness is of necessity included in the very Notion of *God*;) how is it possible that Any of the Works of *His* Hands, should become so *evil*? And if the *Inventions* of men be so *evil*, as Experience too manifestly declares them to be; how is This reconcileable with a firm Belief, that yet *God*, who made them, is perfectly *Good*? When we begin with consulting our *natural Notions of God*, Reason and Demonstration represent him to us of necessity so intirely and absolutely Good, that we are apt to expect, *whatever* is the Product of such a Cause, *whatever* is the Workmanship of such an Author, should have impressed upon it no obscure Image, should carry with it no small Resemblance, of the Perfections of its Maker. On the *other* hand, when we begin with considering things as *in fact* they are in the World, and observe the extreme Wickedness of the greater part of Mankind; 'tis then very hard to apprehend, how so very *frail* and *sinful* a Creature, could come out of the Hands of an All-merciful and Good *God*. Too hard was this Speculation, for the Philosophy of the Heathen World; and it drove many of their Disputants to argue themselves into an

Serm. an Imagination of an irresistible Evil  
 XIII. Cause, in perfect Opposition to, and of  
 equal Power with, the Supreme Good.  
 But the Impossibility of two Supreme  
 Causes, being demonstratively apparent  
 Others, with much greater and better Reason,  
 resolved all the Evil and all the  
 Wickedness in the World, into the Free  
 Choice and voluntary Corruption, of Men  
 whose Nature God originally had created  
 Good. And yet even still a Difficulty remained,  
*Whence* it came to pass, that the  
 the Nature of Man, as of God's creating  
 had indeed nothing *actually* in it but  
 Good; yet it should be so *frail* and fallible,  
 so *prone* to Evil, and so *apt* to be  
 seduced, as by Experience it was found  
 to be. The true Occasion of This, is  
*briefly intimated* to us in the sacred Writings,  
 in the History of the *Fall of Man*.  
 And evidently there is nothing any way  
 inconsistent with the Divine Goodness in  
*This*, that God whose inexhaustible Wisdom  
 and Power shows forth itself most  
 properly in producing a never-failing variety  
 of Creatures of different Natures,  
 Capacities, and Faculties; should suffer  
 the *Posterity of Adam* to be of a more  
 frail and fallible Nature, more subject to  
 Temptation and more prone to be deceived,



ceived, than they would otherwise have been; after their first Parent had forfeited those advantageous Circumstances of his first Creation, to which he had *originally* no more Right, (but by the free Gift and mere good pleasure of God,) than he had to the Powers and Perfections of an *Angel*. And *Adam* might with as just Reason have complained against the Goodness of God, because he was not created an *Angel in Heaven*; as *We* can, for our not being Born in *Paradise*. Nor is it more inconsistent with the Divine Goodness, to suffer *Us*, in consequence of *His* introducing Sin into the World, to become *more* frail and fallible, *more* peccable and obnoxious to Temptation, than *He* at first was; than it was inconsistent with the same Goodness, to make *Him*, by the *original* Condition of his Creation, subject to Temptation and to Sin *at all*. In a Word: Either we must be so unreasonable as to assert, that the Goodness of God cannot allow him to make *Any* Creature at all; because no Creature can be originally and absolutely incapable of Sinning: Or else, by the same reason he may likewise, reconcileably with his Goodness, make all *Variety* of Creatures, in all the various degrees of Frailty and Liableness

to

Serm. to Temptation: Always *excepting* That  
 XIII. of being *necessarily* and *unavoidably* Wicked  
 and Miserable; and always *supposing*  
 that God will finally judge with perfect  
 Equity these *frail* Beings, each of them  
*according to what he has, and not ac-*  
*cording to what he has not.* And still  
*much less* inconsistent will it be with the  
 same Divine Goodness, to permit the Po-  
 sterity of a sinful and depraved Creature  
 to continue *by natural consequence* in  
*lower and more obnoxious* Rank of Be-  
 ings, than possibly they would have been  
 placed in, had no such Depravation been  
 introduced either by our *First Parents*  
 or by *Any of his Successors.*

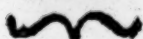
*Some Writers* have indeed, without suf-  
 ficient Warrant from Scripture, carried  
 this Matter further; and have asserted  
 that, for the Sin of *Adam*, not only him-  
 self and his Posterity were made subject  
 to *Death*, and to all the *Miseries of this*  
*mortal Life*, consequent upon the Earth's  
 being cursed for his Sake; and that they  
 became very *weak and frail*, exposed to  
*more* Temptations, and *more* prone to Sin;  
 but that moreover *all Mankind*, for That  
*One Transgression* of their *Fore-Father*,  
 were actually liable to be condemned to  
 the

ne Punishment of eternal Torments; Sermon.  
nd were by Nature so Wicked and so en- XIII.

rely indisposed to all Good, that the Will  
f Man had thenceforward no more Li-  
erty to choose what was Right, than a  
Dead Man has Power to restore himself to  
life. But These things, the Scripture  
does not teach; how great soever it repre-  
sents the Depravity of Human Nature. And  
indeed, to suppose that *God himself* sends  
men into the World, under an Absolute  
Necessity in their very Nature, of being  
*Wicked and Miserable*; is not much bet-  
ter, than what some Heathens imagined,  
of their being made so by the Power of  
an Opposite Supreme *Evil Principle*.  
How much more Wise and Reasonable  
the Determination of *Solomon* in the  
Text: Who in Matters of Difficulty and  
deep Inquiry, in things wherein 'tis im-  
possible for the narrow Understanding of  
short-sighted Mortals to discover the whole  
Order and Method, the Occasion and  
Reason of many of the Divine Proceed-  
ings; advises us to *separate* the *Certain*  
from the *Uncertain*; to adhere to what  
we certainly know to be True, and not  
be moved from it by the Uncertainty of  
what we cannot discover! For so he  
con-



Serm. concludes a difficult and profound Inquiry;  
XIII. *Lo, This only have I found.*



He had been in vain searching into the Depths of Providence, and attempting to comprehend the Counsel of the Most High. And indeed, What Wonder is it that Man, who sees so *small a Portion* of the Works of God from the Beginning to the End, should not be able to comprehend the Wisdom of the *Whole*? *Al* *This*, says he, *have I proved by Wisdom* ver. 23: *I said, I will be Wise, but it was far from me: That which is far off and exceeding deep, who can find it out*. And then he concludes in the Words of the Text; *Lo, This only have I found.*

Among the things impossible to be discovered by human Understanding, there is still always *something* certain and to be depended upon; *something*, in which a rational Person may acquiesce and be satisfied; *something*, on which he may with Confidence fix his Foot. *Lo, This have I found.*

The *particular* Inquiry, upon occasion of which the Wise man makes this Conclusion

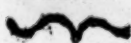
question, was the Consideration of the Sermon.  
 difficulty I now mentioned; viz. What XIII.  
 might be the *reason* of the exceeding great  
 depravity and Corruption of Human Na-  
 ture; ver. 25, *I applied mine Heart to*  
*know, and to search, and to seek out*  
*Wisdom, and the Reason of things, and*  
*know the WICKEDNESS of Folly,*  
*and of Foolishness and Madness.* And  
 the Result was: *Lo, This only have I*  
*found; that God hath made Man upright,*  
*but they have sought out many In-*  
*ventions.*

In the Words, we may observe these  
 two things. 1st. A general Direction of  
 estimation, that in *all Questions of Dif-*  
*culty* whatsoever, we ought to *separate*  
 that is *Certain* from that which is *Un-*  
*certain*: and never think it a sufficient  
 reason to depart from *One Truth*, that  
 our Faculties have not enabled us to dis-  
 cover *All*. *Lo, THIS ONLY have I*  
*found.* 2dly, An *Application* of this ge-  
 neral Direction, to That great Question  
 particular; *Whence the Corruption and*  
*depravity of Humane Nature arises.* *This*  
*have I found, that God has made man*  
*upright, but they have sought out many*  
*inventions.*

*First,*

Serm.

XIII.



*First*, Here is a *general* Direction of Intimation; that in *all Questions* of Difficulty whatsoever, we ought to separate what is *Certain*, from that which is *Uncertain*; and never think it a sufficient reason to depart from *One Truth*, that our Faculties have not inabled us to discover *All*. *Lo, This only have I found*. The Works of God, are infinite and boundless; and the Understanding of Man is limited and finite. We cannot therefore comprehend the *whole* Works of God, because our Understandings are *not infinite*; And yet, because we have Understanding given us, therefore we ought to endeavour to understand them *in part*. The Scripture frequently declares the Incomprehensibleness of the Works of God; And no where more emphatically, than in this Book of *Ecclesiastes*. *Ch. iii, v. 11, He has made every thing beautiful in his time; also he has set the World in their Heart; that no man can find out the Work that God maketh, from the beginning to the End*. Again, *ch. viii, 17, Then I beheld all the Work of God, that a man cannot find out the Work that is done under the Sun; because though a man labour*



Seek it out, yet he shall not find it; yea Sermon.  
 further, though a WISE man think to XIII.  
 know it, yet shall he not be able to find  
 it. And *ch. xi, 5*, *As thou knowest not*  
*what is the way of the Spirit, nor how*  
*the Bones do grow in the Womb of her*  
*that is with Child; even so thou knowest*  
*not the Works of God, who maketh all.*  
 Nevertheless, both by *Reason* and *Scripture*  
 we are directed to *study* the Works  
 of God; That, by what we *can* discover,  
 we may learn to admire and adore his  
 Wisdom in what we *can not* discover;  
 and by what we *are able* to understand,  
 we are convinced of the Excellency of the  
 things that *exceed* our Comprehension.

To instance in *Particulars*. In *what*  
*manner* this beautiful Fabrick of the  
 World was *made*, and *how* the several  
 parts of it in particular were *formed*;  
 the greatest Philosophers upon Earth have  
 by no means been able to discover. *This*  
*only have they found*, that these things  
 are evidently the Works of an *Intel-*  
*ligent and Powerful Cause*, and cannot  
 possibly be the Effects either of *Chance*  
 or of *Necessity*.

U

In

Serm.

XIII. Providence in the *Government* of the World, shall finally be cleared, has been a thing too hard for the *Wise*st of men to comprehend, and a *Depth* inscrutable to the most enlarged *Understandings*. *This* only, are they well assured of; that *the Judge of all the Earth*, will do what *is right*; will deal equitably with *All* persons, according to their respective *Circumstances*; and that, at last, *he will conspicuously be justified in his Saying*, and *be clear when he is judged*.

In *what particular manner* God's *Fore-determination* of *Many* Events, and his *Fore-knowledge* of *All*, is reconcilable with That *Liberty* of Human Action without which there could be no Religion, no Punishment, no Reward; is a *Secret* which we shall then perhaps clearly and thoroughly understand, when the *Book* of Providence shall be laid *open*, and the *Secrets of all Hearts* shall be disclosed when *the Lord* shall come with *ten thousands of his Saints*, not only to execute *Judgment* upon men, but also to convince (as *St Jude* expresses it,) that is, to satisfy, in their *own* reason and conscience

all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly Sinners have spoken against him. In the mean time, This only do we know for certain, and This may we with assurance acquiesce, that God made not Death, neither hath he pleasure in the Destruction of the Living ; nor doth He, by any absolute Predetermination, bring Wickedness and Misery necessarily upon any man ; but ungodly men with their own Words and Works call it unto them.

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Again : *Wherein the Nature and Dignity of the Person of Christ* (beyond what God in Scripture has thought fit to reveal to us) precisely consists, and in *what particular manner* those supereminent Attributes, which the Scripture ascribes to him, are communicated to him from the Father ; is what neither Men nor Angels can perfectly understand. *This only* may Christians of *All capacities* be assured of, and may with confidence depend upon ; that Whosoever imbraces the *Doctrine* which our Saviour taught, and obeys the *Laws* which he has delivered ; and, in order to obtain Remission of past



Serm. Sins, makes constant *Application* to God  
 XIII. in *HIS Name* and through *His* Inter-  
 ~~~~~ cession, as being our *Alone Mediator*  
 with the Father ; and lives in constant
 expectation of his appearing finally as our
Saviour and Judge, to compleat our re-
 conciliation in the day of Redemption,
 and to reward every man according as his
 Work shall be : Whosoever (I say)
 heartily professes this Faith, and perseveres
 in this *Practice* by patient continuance
 in well-doing ; though he enters into No
 difficult Speculations, and confines his
 Thoughts entirely to what he clearly un-
 derstands ; yet *This* he may be assured of
 and abundantly sufficient it is, if but *This*
only he can find ; that (according to the
 gracious Terms of the Gospel-Covenant)
 he shall certainly be partaker of the Sal-
 vation purchased by the Son of God, *ma-*
nifested in the Flesh.

Lastly ; To give but One Instance
 more, (which is *That* alluded to by So-
lomon in the *Text* :) *How* it comes to
 pass, that in a World created by infinite
Goodness, and governed by the Provi-
 dence of the same *Good God*, yet *Wick-*
edness should abound so universally as it
 does ; and our first Parents introducing

Sin into the World, should be permitted Sermon.

to have so great and lasting an Effect, that XIII.

many Men *seem* as it were *originally* and

almost naturally to have strong Inclina-

tions to Vice; though something has al-

ready been offered, and More will be said

in the following Part of this Discourse,

to explain this Difficulty in some mea-

sure; yet, unless we knew the *whole Series*

of Providence from the Beginning to the

End, from the Creation of the Universe

to the final Consummation of all things;

it is no great wonder we should not fully

understand the Whole Counsel of God,

nor be able, in this *very short* and imper-

fect State, to search out to the bottom

so unfathomable a Depth. *This only* do

we *find* demonstrably certain; as being

both clear in the *Reason* of things, and

most expressly moreover declared in *Scripture*;

(and abundantly sufficient it is, for

our present Satisfaction;) that, whatever

Difficulties may *now* arise in this matter,

yet *in the End* it shall appear to the Con-

viction of Sinners, (so that every *Mouth*

shall be stopped before God; stopped, not

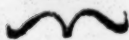
by *Power*, but by the *reason of the case*;

and every *Tongue* shall confess his Justice,)

that God did *make man upright*; only

They themselves have sought out many

Inventions.



A SERMON preach'd

In These and Numberless other Instance appears the Reasonableness of the *general* Direction or Intimation given us in the Text; that, in *all Questions of Difficulty* whatsoever, we ought to *separate* what is *Certain* from that which is *Uncertain*; and never think it a sufficient reason to depart from *One* Truth, that our Faculties have not enabled us to discover *All*. *Lo, This only have I found.*

In *finite* Understandings, which are not capable of comprehending *All* Knowledge, nor of discovering *All* Truth; the highest improvement they can arrive to, and deserving the greatest Commendation, to be able rightly to distinguish what they *can*, from what they *cannot* discover; and so to rest satisfied and acquiesce in what they find, as not to entertain any Doubt concerning the Certainty of *One* Truth, because of the Uncertainty they chance to meet with *Another*.

If we find by strong and undeniable Arguments, that the beautiful *Order* of the several Parts of the World, could not possibly arise from *Chance*; nor the

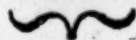
finite *Variety* of things therein, from Sermon.
blind and Unintelligent *Necessity*; nor XIII.
the Exquisite *Fitness* wherewith every ~~~~~
thing is adapted to its proper End, from
any *other Cause* than the Will and Free
Operation of an All-Powerful and All-
Wise Being; Is not *This* sufficient Sa-
tisfaction to a reasonable Mind, though he
cannot comprehend the *Manner how* each
particular was formed? Or, because there
are *some* things, which, for *what End*
they were made, our narrow Understand-
ings cannot discover; is there *therefore*
from thence any Colour of Reason to
doubt, whether any thing was made for
any *End* at all?

In like manner, if we find by evident
Demonstration, that He who in the Be-
ginning *made* the World by his *Power*,
cannot but *govern* it unto the End
by his *Providence*; Is not *This* sufficient
to satisfy a rational Person, tho' he can-
not at present account for *all* its proceed-
ings? Or, is it in any degree reasonable,
because the Counsels of a great Prince *be-
fore* they are entirely put in Execution,
are above the Comprehension of a Mean
Person; that *therefore* That mean Per-
son should conclude the Counsels of the

Serm. Prince to have *no Wisdom* in them, or
 XIII. should doubt whether he had *any Coun-*
 ~~~~~ *sels or Designs* at all?

Again : If we are by Experience as much assured of the *Liberty* of our *Wills* as we are of the *Truth* of our *Understandings*, or the *Reality* of our *Senses* themselves; and have the same thing more over confirmed to us, by all the *Promises* and all the *Threatnings* of God; and that the Divine *Fore-knowledge* is no *Fore-determination* of our *Actions*, but only an *unerring Judgment*, or such a *Kind* of *Prescience* (whatever *That* be,) as is consistent with *Liberty*, and necessarily *presupposes* the *Liberty* of those *Actions* which are foreknown to be free; Have we not abundantly wherein to acquiesce tho' we know not the particular Manner of the Divine *Fore-knowledge*? Or, because there is some *Uncertainty* in the *particular manner* of reconciling it with Human *Liberty*, is there *therefore* any reason to call in question the *Thing itself* which of all others is the most absolutely *Certain*? and pretend to doubt whether we have *Any Liberty*, that is, whether there be *any* such thing as *Religion*, any such thing as *Reason*, any *Understanding*

in Man, or any *power of Acting* at Serm.  
all? XIII.



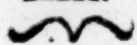
Further : If we are assured by a clear and distinct Revelation, that God has sent his *Son* into the World, to teach us our Duty, and set us an Example of practising it; to *die for the Sins*, and *rise again for the Justification*, of All who shall *effectually* repent and *reform their manners*; to make intercession for us at present, and bring us hereafter unto Glory : Is not *This* sufficient to all the Purposes of Religion and Happiness, tho' we understand not the *manner* of his *generation* from the Beginning, nor *What* the Particulars of *that Glory* were, *which he had with the Father before the World was* ? Or, because reasonable men do not take upon them to *define*, (as the *Schoolmen* have *presumptuously* done,) *how* and *in what particular manner* our Lord was before all Ages *the Brightness of his Father's Glory and the express Image of his Person*; is there *therefore* any Reason to doubt, whether we have any *Saviour*, any *Religion*, any *Hopes of Happiness* at all?

Lastly,



Serm.

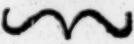
XIII.



Lastly: If it be clearly demonstrable by right Reason, and moreover asserted in express Words of Scripture, that *God has made man upright, but They* Themselves *have sought out many Inventions*: Have we not wherein to acquiesce, though *This only* be all that we *have found*; and we do not perhaps distinctly understand the Reason, *why* the All-Wise Governour of the World, has thought fit to *permit* men thus to corrupt themselves? And this brings me to the

*Second Particular* I propos'd to speak to; namely, the Application of the *general direction* I have been hitherto discoursing upon, to that great Question *in particular, Whence* the Corruption and Depravity of Human Nature arises. *Lo, This only have I found, that God has made man upright, but they have sought out many Inventions.* But the Time not permitting to enter upon This, I shall conclude at present with Two very brief *Inferences* from what has been already said.

The *FIRST* is; That the Rule laid down in the foregoing Discourse, extends

tends only to the *exprefs Revelations* of *Serm.*  
*God*, and not to any Doctrines or Expli- *XIII.*  
 cations of *Men*. 

The *SECOND* is; That, from what has been said, we may see the great Unreasonableness of *Scepticism* in matters of Religion; and the Absurdity of Those, who, from the *Uncertainty* of some Questions of great *Difficulty* and of *small Consequence*, would draw reasons for doubting in matters of the *greatest Certainty* and of the *utmost Importance*. In Questions of *Natural Philosophy*, men do not so argue: In the management of *Worldly Affairs*, they do not so act; But *separate* always what is *Certain*, from that which is *Uncertain*; And the *Uncertainty* of One thing, does not hinder them from relying, in all the Business of Life, upon the unquestionable *Certainty* of Another. There is the same, nay much stronger reason, why they should act in like manner in matters of *Religion*: Where That which is of the *greatest Importance*, is always of the *greatest Certainty*; and whatever is *less Certain* and more difficult to be understood, is also always proportionably of *less moment*. We have upon This Head, the final Advice of *Job*,  
 and

Serm. and the last and most considerate Word  
 XIII. of *Solomon*. The *Former* of whom, concludes his Discourse concerning the Uncertainty of all *other* Knowledge, with this Admirable Reflexion, *Job* xxviii, 28, *And unto man he said; The Fear of the Lord, That is Wisdom; and to depart from evil, is Understanding.* The *Latter* having in a whole Book elegantly represented the Confusion and Uncertainty of all Human Affairs, sums up his whole Discourse in this Wise Admonition, *Ecclesi* xii, 13, *Let us hear the Conclusion of the whole Matter: Fear God, and keep his Commandments; for This is the Whole, the whole Duty and the whole Happiness, of Man.*





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A  
S E R M O N

Preach'd in the  
PARISH-CHURCH  
O F

*St James's Westminster,*

On Sunday, Dec. 22. 1723.


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ECCLES. VII, 29.

*Lo, This only have I found, that God  
hath made Man upright; but They  
have sought out many Inventions.*

THE Book of *Ecclesiastes* is a  
Collection of the general Conclu-  
sions drawn by *Solomon*, from his  
Observations upon Human Nature, and  
on the State of the World. He was a  
person, of whom the Scripture says, that  
God gave him *Wisdom and Understand-*  
ing

Serm.  
XIV.



Serm. *ing exceeding much; such as none of the*

XIV. *Kings had, that were before him; nei-*  
 ~~~~~ *ther shall there Any after him, have the*  
like; 1 Kings iv, 29; and 2 Chron. i, 12.
 His own Experience of all the enjoy-
 ments of Life, and his High Station in
 the World, gave him the greatest Opportu-
 nities, and the largest Field, to improve
 his Understanding by the *most General Ob-*
servations; and to make the truest Judge-
ment of the real Value, of every thing
in the World. I the Preacher was
King over Israel in Jerusalem; And I
gave my Heart to seek and search out by
Wisdom, concerning all things that are
done under Heaven, ch. i, ver. 12. I com-
muned with mine own Heart, saying, Lo,
I am come to great estate, and have got-
ten more Wisdom than all they that have
been before me in Jerusalem; yea, my
Heart had great Experience of Wisdom
and Knowledge; And I gave my Heart
to know Wisdom, and to know Madnes
and Folly, ver. 16. The Result of all,
was; that he found every thing to be Va-
nity, and Vexation of Spirit. That, even
in Wisdom itself, is much grief; and he
that increaseth Knowledge, increaseth
Sorrow. That laughter and joy, is Mad-
ness; and Mirth, what Benefit is there
 in

it? That, *when Goods increase, They are increased that eat them; and What good is there to the Owners thereof, satisfying the beholding of them with their Eyes?* That he considered all the Oppressions that are done under the Sun; and behold, the Tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no Comforter; and on the side of their Oppressors was Power, but They had no Comforter. That, with respect to the Shortness and Uncertainty of Life, *MAN* also knoweth not his Time; But as the Fishes that are taken in an evil Net, and as the Birds that are caught in the Snare, so are the Sons of Men snared in an evil Time, when it falleth suddenly upon them. That, notwithstanding This, yet the Hearts of the Sons of men were full of evil; and madness is in their Heart while they live; and after That, they go to the Dead. That he applied his Heart to know and to search out the REASON of These things; and to know the wickedness of Folly, even of Foolishness and Madness. That All these things he proved by Wisdom, and said he would be wise, but it was far from him; For, That which is far off, and exceeding deep, who

Serm. *who can find it out?* The Particulars
 XIV. were impossible even for *His* Understanding to discover. But, *in general*, This he was sure of, that *God was true*, that *every Man was a Liar*; that *God was righteous in all his Ways*, and *Holy in all his Works*; and *Man*, the Cause of all his own Misery. *Lo, This only have I found, that God has made Man upright, but they have sought out many Inventions.*

In the Words, I have observed the Two Particulars. 1st. A *general Direction*, or *Intimation*; that in all Questions of Difficulty whatsoever, we ought always to *separate* what is *Certain*, from that which is *Uncertain*; and never look upon it as a sufficient reason to depart from *One Truth*, that our Faculties are not inable us to discover *All*. *Lo, This only have I found.* 2^{dly}. An *Application* of this *general Direction*, to The great Question in particular, *Whence the Corruption and Depravity of Human Nature arises.* *This only have I found, that God has made Man upright, but they have sought out many Inventions.*

The 1st of these, I have already discoursed upon. It remains that I consider This time, (2^{dly}) the *Application* the Wise man makes of this general Direction, to That *great Question* in particular, *Whence* the Corruption and Depravity of Human Nature arises. *This only have I found, that God has made Man Upright, but they have sought out many inventions.* Now there is in *this*, as in most *other Questions*, something that is *Uncertain* and *Difficult* to be explained; something, that the Understanding even of *Solomon himself* could not attain to; something, that 'tis not *possible* for us to find out, nor *needful* for us to desire to know; something, that is to be resolved perhaps into the mere *good pleasure* of God; or rather into *Reasons* (for God does nothing *without* reason,) which *We* at present are *not at all* capable of judging of; *why* God in his infinite Wisdom thought fit, among that immense and boundless Variety of his Works, to make some Creatures of such a *particular degree* of Capacity and Understanding, so frail, so fallible, so liable to be seduced and corrupted, as Mankind is. To *this part* of the Question 'tis sufficient to reply with

Serm. the Apostle; *Shall the Thing formed, say*

XIV. *unto him that formed it, Why hast thou*

made me thus? Hath not the Potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? That is, Hath not God a Right to make what Variety of Creatures, and of what different Capacities, he pleases? But then there is also on the other hand something in the Same Question that is very Certain, something that is infallibly true and may be depended upon, something in which a reasonable Mind may acquiesce and rest satisfied viz. that though God has indeed made us frail and fallible, yet he has not made us necessarily Wicked; He has made us subject and liable to Temptation, but not of necessity Slaves to Sin. That we are Capable of Corrupting ourselves, is indeed the Consequence of that Nature which God has given us; But all Actual Corruptions, are the Effects of our Free Choice and the Fruit of our Own Inventions. God has made man upright, but They have sought out many Inventions.

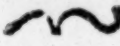
Of This Declaration of the Wise man there are two parts. 1st. A justification of God, from all possibility of being charg'd

with the Sins of Men : *God has made* Sermon.
Man upright. 2dly. A confession, that XIV.
 the Sin and Misery of *Men*, is wholly
 owing to themselves : *But they have*
thought out many Inventions.

I. Here is a justification of God, from
 the possibility of being charged with the
 sins of Men : *God has made man Upright.*
 could wicked Men with any truth affirm,
 that Wickedness was the Fault of their
 Nature, and not merely the Corruption
 of their *Will*; it would be a just Excuse
 both in the Sight of *Men* and before the
 Tribunal of *God*, to alledge that they
 were only what *God made* them, and
 that they could not but of Necessity be.
 There is nothing therefore more constant-
 and solicitously inculcated in Scripture
 on all Occasions, than that Men's de-
 cline is of *themselves*, and not the
 appointment of Him that made them.
 And upon *this* are grounded all the *Pro-*
phesies, and the reasonableness of all the
threatnings of God. But though Wick-
 edness is not Mens Nature; yet Weakness
 and Temptation, and Liableness to Sin,
 And the very Nature of a Probation-
 ate, the Promises of Reward to Obe-
 dience, and the Threatnings of Punish-
 ment

Serm. ment to them that shall comply with
 XIV. Temptations; *supposes* men to be Capable
 ~~~~~ of being corrupted, and to be always  
 in danger of being seduced into Sin.

'Tis evident therefore 1<sup>st</sup>, that God having made Man *upright*, does not signify his having made him *incapable* of Sin, or exempt from all Temptation. No: This is perhaps a State that no Creature ever was, or can be, created in. For *he chargeth even his Angels with Folly, and the Heavens are not pure in his Sight*. Not only the Angels that *fell*, and incurred irrecoverably the final Wrath of God, appear evidently to have been created capable of Sinning: But the *good* Angels themselves, who kept their first Estate, and never forfeited their Title to the Divine Favour; even *These* the incomprehensible Purity of the Holy One charges with Folly. And nothing is perfectly faultless in the All-seeing Eyes, of Him who alone is Goodness and Holiness itself. And indeed, could any Creature be made originally and absolutely incapable of sinning, there would be no Room for Trial, there could be no Probation, there could be no Obedience, and no Reward: But the Impiety which such a Creature would

, would be by Nature complete and Sermon, defectible, like to the Happiness of God XIV. himself. Which is inconsistent with the nature of a Created Being. 

2dly, therefore ; Neither from This impression of God's having made Man right, ought it to be imagined, that God originally created *Man* in That Excellency of Nature, which *Angels*, who were liable to Sin, were at first indued with. There is a *proper* Excellency, peculiar to every Species or Kind of things. And as, in the *Natural World*, God created every thing perfect in its kind ; and held, when he had finish'd it, that it was very good ; And yet One thing, though perfect in its Order and Degree, is nevertheless very far from equalling the Perfections of Another, that belongs to the more exalted Rank of a nobler Species : In the *Moral World* of rational and intelligent Creatures, there are Capacities and Faculties, there are Perfections and excellencies, *peculiar* to every Sort of things, and appportionate to their proper subject. And as we always understand, when we say God has given to such or such person, Wisdom, Understanding, and knowledge ; As we always (I say ) under-



Serm. stand thereby, that he has indued Th  
 XIV. Person in a remarkable manner with t

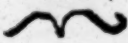
Knowledge and Wisdom of a *Man*, n  
 with That of a Superior and more Powe  
 ful Spirit: So, when the Preacher declar  
 in the Text, that God did make Man *u*  
*right*; 'tis manifest it must be understood  
 that he created him with the *Uprightnes*  
 not of an *Angel*, but of a *Man*; w  
*such* an Uprightness, as is compatible  
 a frail, mortal, and fallible Creature.

3dly. Further yet; Neither can t  
 Words of the Text be so interpreted,  
 if *Solomon* meant to speak of Th  
*particular Uprightness*, wherein o  
 first Parent was created in *Paradise*;  
 opposition to *that general* State of C  
*ruption*, which has ever since prevailed  
 the World. For he does not insist up  
*This*, that God created our *first Pare*  
*upright*; but upon *This*, that, notwit  
 standing all that *can be said* of the Mea  
 nefs and Frailness of our Nature, n  
 withstanding all the disadvantages we c  
 alledge ourselves to lie under in co  
 sequence of Sin having been brought in  
 the World; yet *still* God has made M  
 upright. *Man*; That is, the *Species*  
 whole Race of *Men*: All those particul

Men, who in the following Words are  
said to *have sought out many Inventions.* Sermon, XIV.

The Uprightness therefore here spoken  
of, cannot be *That original* Uprightness,  
which was forfeited by the Sin of our first  
Parent; but *That continued* Uprightness,  
with which every man Now comes into  
the World, notwithstanding the Fall;  
*That* Uprightness, which every wicked  
man, in his own proper Person, is justly  
condemned for voluntarily departing  
from, by *seeking* out and following his  
own evil *Inventions.* And *This Upright-*  
*ness,* which belongs even to *Fallen* Man,  
and which is necessary to discharge God  
from the Sins of Men, consists in This;  
That, notwithstanding all the *Weakness*  
and *Infirmity* of our Nature, which God,  
who considers that we are but Dust, rea-  
dily allows for; and, notwithstanding all  
the *Consequences* of the Fall of *Adam*,  
which are abundantly provided against by  
the Death of *Christ*; and notwithstanding  
all our *Temptations*, and all our prone-  
ness to Sin: Yet no man is under a *Ne-*  
*cessity* of being Wicked: No man can  
say 'tis the Fault of God's Creation, no,  
not even of *that frail Nature* which he  
receives from *Adam*, but the Wicked  
Choice of his own unreasonable Will,

Serm. that makes him *live vitiously*, and com  
 XVI. ply with those Temptations which in this  
 ~~~~~ frail State naturally and perpetually sur  
 round him. That we are perpetually *liable to Temptation*; is indeed the weak
 Condition of our Nature, and the Un
 happiness of our present State. But *Temptation* is not *Sin*; And being *tempted*, is
 not inconsistent with *Uprightness*: That
 is, 'tis not inconsistent with *such Uprightness*, as God expects of us in this very
 frail, fallible and imperfect State. Did
 God *now* require of us the Uprightness of
Angels, or even the Uprightness which
 our *First Parents* ought to have maintain
 ed in Paradise; we might perhaps have
 had reason to complain, that the Abili
 ties of our Nature were not answerable
 to what was expected from us. But since
 the Obedience and Holiness required of
 us, is only of the *same Kind and Proportion*, with *that Uprightness* our Nature
still retains even since the Fall; 'tis evi
 dently not the Fault of *God*, nor of that
Nature he even *Now* gives us, but the
 wicked *Inventions* only of our own
 Hearts, that make us wicked and misera
 ble. God has given us *Eyes* to discern
 the Light, *Understanding* to distinguish be
 tween Good and Evil, a *Will* whereby we



are enabled to choose the One and refuse the other. And in the *Truth* or *Reality* of these Faculties, not in the *Perfection* of them; that is, not in their being such *CANNOT* be *deceived* or imposed upon, but in their being such as *do not necessarily deceive US* without our own Negligence and great Fault; in *this* consists the Uprightness wherewith God Now sends men into the World, even since the Fall.

There is only *One* great Objection, against what has been hitherto offered upon this Head. And That is, that the Doctrine of *Original Sin* has by Divines sometimes been so explained, as if Man, since the Fall, had no remains left of those Powers and Faculties, which Alone distinguish him to be a free and rational Agent. Which Explication if it were true, 'tis evident the *Sins of Men* would indeed immediately become chargeable upon *God*. And, far from making Man *upright*, as *Solomon* affirms; it would on the contrary be true, that he Now makes men *not so much as capable* of any *Religion* at all. For the clearing of This Prejudice therefore; we need only here, as in all *other* Difficulties, *separate* the
Cer-

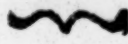
Serm. *Certain Doctrine of Scripture, from the*

XIV. *Uncertain* Explications of men: And then the whole *Ground* of the Objection will be taken away. Now *All* that the Scripture teaches concerning this matter is contained in what it affirms, *1st*, concerning the *Transgression itself* of our first Parents; and *2dly*, concerning the *Consequences* of that Transgression, to them and their Posterity.

1st. The History of the *Transgression itself* of our first Parents, is related very briefly in the Third chapter of *Genesis*. And though neither there, nor elsewhere in Scripture, is it called by that Name yet it may very properly be called the *Original Sin of Men*; because it was the first introducing of Sin into this World and, before it, there was no such thing as Sin upon Earth. This *Original Sin of Men* therefore, was the *Actual Sin* of our first Parent; But it could not be the *Actual Sin* of any other Person, because it was committed before any Other had Being. To affirm that the *first actual Sin* of *Adam*, was *Imputed* to all Mankind as well as to Him; is to affirm what the Scripture does not teach. And besides; if, to impute to *Other Person*

the *actual Sin* of *One*, be to account it *Theirs* as well as *His*; 'tis evident This is impossible with God, who cannot account *Sin*, or *any thing else*, to be what it is not.

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But 2dly, Though the *Actual Transgression* of our first Parent, was *His* only, and not *Ours*; yet there are the *Consequences* of thus introducing Sin into the World, which are common to *Him* and his *Posterity*. And These are, *Mortality*, *Exclusion out of Paradise*, the *Miseries of the present Life*, and a greater *Liability and stronger Temptation to Sin*, in their corrupt *Affections*. God threatened *Adam*, that in the day he eat of the *forbidden Fruit*; that is, whensoever he should knowingly *presume* to do what God had thought fit to *forbid*; he should *surely die*. And had That Threat been *immediately* executed, 'tis plain his *Posterity* could have had no Being at all; and as *plain*, that no Injustice could thereby have been done to *them*, who never *Were*. But the Mercy of God granted *Adam* a Reprieve; And, instead of *dying* immediately, he *only became Subject to Mortality* by his Sin. That is; Being now excluded from the Benefit of the *Tree of Life*,

Serm. *Life*, (which was a *Means* or an *Emblem*
 XIV. of *Immortality*,) consequently his *natural*

~~~~~ *Mortality* must of necessity *actually* take place upon him. And so it must likewise upon all his Posterity. In which matter; since it was merely the Effect of God's Mercy towards *Adam*, to permit us a possibility of beginning to live; it cannot be thought unjust, that he should appoint us to die. Especially since *That Death* which was introduced by *Adam*, (and *whatever* would have been the *Consequences* of it in the *future State*,) was as universally removed by the *second Adam*, (who is the Lord from Heaven,) as it spread universally after the Transgression of the *first*. For *as in Adam all die*, (all men are made mortal;) *even so in Christ shall all be made alive*, (shall be restored from that natural Mortality,) *Rom, v, 22.* And *as, by the offense of One, Death came upon all men to Condemnation*; *even so by the righteousness of One, the free Gift is come upon all men to justification of Life*, ver. 18; that is, to a Possibility again of obtaining *eternal Life*.

As to the *Exclusion out of Paradise*, and the *Miseries of the present Life* consequent upon God's cursing the Earth;  
 they

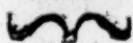
they are, with regard to the *Posterity* of Adam, only *natural and necessary* Consequences of his Losing those Free Gifts and Favours of God, which neither *They* nor *He* ever had any Claim of Right to enjoy. And, after all; the miseries men bring upon themselves in This World by their *own Sins*, are much greater than those they suffer in consequence of the Transgression of *Adam*. For, notwithstanding God's Curse upon the Earth, the condition of men would be in many degrees better than it is; nay, even very tolerable; did it not perpetually happen, that One man's Sin makes him a Tyrant to Others, and an Enemy to himself. And that *Men*, who have their *Beings* through Mercy, should undergo the *Natural Calamities* of this *Mortal* State; cannot be unjust with God, any more than that they should at all be *born Mortal*. Nor can *Any Reason* be given, why God might not have made men *at first* to live but such a certain number of Years as they *Now* do, if he had so pleased; nor why he might not *originally* have put them into the World with only *such a Proportion* of Good to be enjoyed by them, as virtuous and good men may *Now* enjoy in This World,

Serm.

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Serm.  
XIV.

World, if all men were truly virtuous and religious.



Lastly ; As to the *Temptations and Liableness to Sin*, which are greater and stronger since the Fall, through mens corrupt Affections ; they are by no means inconsistent with *That Uprightness*, which I am now speaking of. For *Temptation* is not *Sin*, but the *Tryal* and the Occasion of *Virtue*. And God, who knows how to make just *Allowances* for every one's case, with the most exact Proportion and Equity ; may prove the Sincere Obedience of his Creatures, by what Tryals and Temptations he himself, in his All-wise Government, thinks fit to permit. In all which, 'tis certain that God makes no man *Wicked* by *Nature* ; but every man *then* sinneth, *when he is drawn away of his own Lust and inticed*. For, *when Lust has conceived, it bringeth forth Sin ; and Sin, when 'tis finished, bringeth forth Death*. Jam. i, 15. And This may suffice for Explication of the *first* part of the Wise man's Assertion in the Text, in justification of God from all possibility of being charged with the Sins of Men ; that *God has made Man upright*.

II. Here



II. Here is in the 2<sup>d</sup> place a Confession, that the Sin and Misery of Men, is wholly owing to *themselves*: But *THEY* have *thought out many Inventions*. And concerning This, there needs not much to add. For when it has once been made appear, that God made Man *upright*; that is, that notwithstanding all the Infirmities of their Nature, he has endued them with *proper Faculties* for their *present* State, to enable them to perform the Duty that is expected of them, according to the Proportions of a *Man*, in this very Imperfect State; It follows in course, that the *Corruptions* wherewith they deprave themselves, are not the Fault of that *Nature* which God has given them, but the perverse *Inventions* of their own Wills. And indeed, whoever looks into the World, cannot but observe, that much the greater part of the Vices of Men, arise plainly from bad Education and ill Example, from the Allurements of the World and the Temptations of ill Company, from the Violence of ungoverned Passions and the perverseness of unreasonable Desires: None of which things do belong properly to the *Nature* of a Reasonable Creature, but are unreasonable

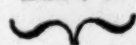
Serm. sonable and violent and therefore *unnatural* Corruptions of the Faculties when  
 XV. with God has indued us.

To enter into the *Particulars* of *A* vitious Habits, would be impossible, well as disagreeable. But, to mention briefly the Three *great* Heads or Instances of Corruption.

1<sup>st</sup>. With respect to our Duty toward *God*. Is it not evidently *agreeable* to the *nature* of *rational* Creatures, to adore and worship, to love and to obey, the Supreme Author and Preserver of the Being? And is it not an *unnatural Invention*, sought out by the most brutish degeneracy; to forsake the Worship of Him that Made the Heavens and the Earth and the Seas and all that in them is, to worship Wood and Stones graven by Art and Man's Device; and to *change the Glory of the incorruptible God, into Images made like to corruptible Man, and Birds, and four-footed Beasts, and creeping things?* Or even in the Service and Worship of the *True God*, to forsake *That Method* of Worship which he himself has appointed; and set up any *Inventions of their own*, in the Place

what God has expressly command- Sermon.

XIV.



2dly, With regard to our Duty towards Men: Does not *Nature* plainly lead us to Righteousness and Truth, to Justice and Equity, to universal Charity and Good-Will towards each other? And is it not apparently the Base *Invention* of a Heart which has laid aside all Humanity, that is, all true humane *Nature*; to enrich itself by Fraud and Unrighteousness, by oppressing the innocent and the poor; or to exalt itself by Violence and Cruelty, and insulting over the Miseries of its fellow-Creatures?

Lastly, With regard to our Duty towards *Ourselves*: Are not the Appetites of *Nature*, reasonable and modest, regular and sober, peaceable and contented within their proper limits? And is it not plainly the *Invention* of an evil Heart, and of wilfully degenerate and corrupted Spirit; to heighen unnatural Appetites by Art, to blow up disorderly Passions by obstinate Self-Will, and to indulge unreasonable Desires by habitual opposition to Right Reason and Religion?

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Serm.

XIV.

~~~~~ In All these Cases therefore 'tis manifestly true, that *God has made Man upright, but They themselves have sought out many Inventions.* *Inventions*, to corrupt by indirect Practices the Simplicity of Nature : And, when they have so done, *Inventions* to deceive themselves, by giving the Name of *Nature* to the *unnatural* Effects of evil Customs and Habits ; and *Inventions* to lay themselves asleep in their Error and Deceit, by finding out numberless ways of reconciling a *Wicked Life* with the Hopes and with the Pretences of *Religion*.

The Application of what has been said, may be very brief. And

1st. From what has been said, we may observe, that the Difficulty of obeying the Commandments of God, does not so much arise, generally speaking, from the Nature of our *Duty*, or from the Nature of *Man* ; as from the Temptations of *the World*, and from the *Custom* of Sinning. To Idolatry, Profaneness and Irreligion, there is *no Temptation* in *Nature* ; but from the Wickedness of Men, *willfully* deceiving one another, and being deceived.

ceived. To Iniquity, Cruelty and Inju- Sermon.
 stice, there is nothing in *human Nature* XIV.
 that prompts us ; But the Vices are *inhuman*
as much as unchristian, and the ef-
 fects only of unreasonable indulged evil
 Habits. To Intemperance and Debauche-
 ry, there *are* indeed in many persons
 strong Inclinations, that may seem *more*
natural, and to be more immediate Effects
 of man's *Original* corruption ; being a
Law in the Members, warring against the
Law of the Mind, and bringing men
into Captivity to the Law of Sin and
 Death. But even *These* inclinations, are
Temptations only, and not *Sins* ; unless
 they be consented to and indulged, in
unreasonable and unlawful Instances ;
 which God has given us the Use of Rea-
 son, and the Obligations of Religion, on
 purpose to restrain. If therefore it be *Na-*
tural to Man to be a *reasonable* Creature,
 'tis *natural* to him also to be *Religious* ;
 Religion being nothing else but the high-
 est Reason, and the keeping our Passions
 subject and obedient to its Laws. Where-
 fore when St *Paul* affirms, *Eph. ii, 3,*
that we all were by NATURE children
of wrath ; 'tis a very great Abuse of Scrip-
 ture, to understand him as if he had said,

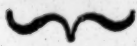
Serm. that *we were CREATED* children of
 XIV. *wrath*. For the *Nature* the Apostle there
 speaks of, is not *That nature* wherein
 God created us, but *That second Nature*
 of evil Habits, which wicked men bring
 upon themselves by *Custom* in Sinning;
That Nature, which we usually mean e-
 ven in common Speech, when we say
 'tis the *Nature* of a profane or vitious
 man, to act profanely or vitiously. For
 so are the Apostle's *express* Words: *We*
were by Nature, saith he, *the children of*
wrath, even as Others; because among
them WE also had our conversation in
times past, in the Lusts of our Flesh,
fulfilling the desires of the Flesh and of
the Mind: Speaking of Christians, con-
 verted from Heathen Wickedness and I-
 dolatry.

And *This* shows, in what manner also
 are to be understood such Texts as these
 which follow. *Behold, I was SHAPEN*
in iniquity, and in Sin did my Mother
CONCEIVE me, Ps. li, 5. *The wicked*
are estranged from the WOMB, they go
astray as soon as they are BORN, speak-
ing lies, Ps. lviii, 3. *I knew that thou*
wouldst deal very treacherously, and wast
called

called a transgressor from the WOMB, Sermon. XIV.
 If. xlvi, 8. *They were a naughty generation, and their malice was BRED in them, and their cogitation would NEVER be changed,* Wisd. xii, 10. The Meaning of all these Texts is, not that men were really wicked by necessity of Nature; but 'tis a complaint of them, that they were *so* wicked and corrupt, *as if*, speaking by way of Similitude, it had been *bred* even in their very *nature*. But that it is not so meant *literally*, appears from hence, that, on the contrary, the same manner of speaking is used concerning *Good* men also. *Job xxxi, 18*, describing his own charitableness to the Poor, he saith; *From my YOUTH, he (the Poor) was brought up with me; and I have guided her (the Widow) from my Mother's WOMB.* And *Ecclus. i, 14*, describing very Righteous men, he saith; *To fear the Lord, is the beginning of Wisdom; and it was created with the Faithful in the WOMB.* The Meaning is; Such persons are as just and righteous, as if Virtue (comparatively speaking) had not been a matter of *Choice*, but as if it had really been a Part even of their *Nature itself*.

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2dly. From what has been said, we may see the Reason of the *Manner* of our Saviour's admonition to his Disciples; when, taking up a *young child* in his arms, and recommending its *natural* Simplicity, humility and innocence; he told them, that *except they were converted and became as little children, they should not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*; for that of *Such was the Kingdom of God*. And St Paul makes use of the same Similitude, 1 Cor. xiv, 20, *In Understanding, saith he, be Men, but in Malice be ye children*; that is, be ye like to those who have not yet sought out any evil *Inventions*.

3dly. We may from hence observe, how *great* the *Sin* of Those is, who by ill Advice, or bad Example, *corrupt* the Minds of *Children*, or of *Men*. This is, in the highest degree, being like unto *Satan*, the great Tempter and Destroyer of Mankind. And if *They* shall severely be punished, who *comply* with those Temptations which rob them of their *Own* Innocency, and destroy that *Uprightness* wherein God had created

ated them ; of how much forer Punish- Sermon.
ment shall *Those* be thought worthy, XIV.
who industriously labour in teaching
Others also to seek out evil *Inven-*
tions !



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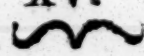
Preach'd in the
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St James's Westminster,

On Sunday, Dec. 29. 1723.

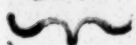
R O M. IX. 23, 24.

*And that he might make known the
Riches of his Glory on the Vessels of Mer-
cy, which he had afore prepared unto
Glory: Even Us whom he hath called,
not of the Jews only, but also of the
Gentiles.*

T H E R E is no part of the whole Serm.
New Testament, of greater dif- XV.
ficulty to be understood; or which
has been more misapplied by the ignorant, 
more

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more wrested by the learned, and more falsely interpreted by the melancholy pious person; than this *9th chapter* of *St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*. In which Chapter, whilst Some have greatly perplexed themselves by picking out some of the middle verses of it; concerning God's electing the *children which were yet unborn*, and had *neither done good nor evil*; concerning his *loving Jacob*, and *hating Esau*; concerning his *hardning Pharaoh*, and *shewing Mercy on whom he will have Mercy*, and *having Compassion on whom he will have Compassion*; and concerning his having the same Power over Mankind, as the *Potter* has over the *Clay*, to make one Vessel to Honour, and another to Dishonour: Whilst some, I say, have greatly perplexed themselves by picking out some of these particulars singly; 'tis yet nevertheless very evident, both from the Apostle's *Introduction* of his Discourse at the *Beginning* of the chapter, and from his *Conclusion* and summing up of his Argument at *the End*; that the design of the *Whole*, is not at all to speak concerning any Decree of God, with respect to the *final and eternal state of particular Persons*; but only to declare both the Sovereign Power and the Justice of God, in

in distributing to *different Nations* in *divers Ages* *what different Advantages* he pleases; and revealing his Will to them at *what Times* and in *what manner* he thinks fit. As, in that great instance of his rejecting the *Jews*, and calling in the *Gentiles*. Which, at the *Beginning* of the chapter, the Apostle expressly declares to be the Aim and Intention of his Discourse: And at the *End* he sums it up, as the Conclusion designed: And all the *intermediate* parts of it, and the Examples therein alledged, are plainly nothing but *Similitudes* and *Illustrations* of this Argument.

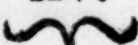
Serm.
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The Words of the Text itself, are as clear a Declaration of this whole matter, as can be desired. *That he might make known the Riches of his Glory on the Vessels of Mercy, which he had afore prepared unto Glory; even US whom he has called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles.* Here the Apostle clearly and expressly declares, that by the *Vessels of Mercy, prepared afore of God unto Glory*, (of whom he had been treating in the fore-going part of the Chapter,) he does not mean *particular Persons* chosen unconditionally to *eternal Salvation*; but the
whole

Serm. *whole Body of Christians, even Us whom*
 XV. *he has called, (and who have obeyed That*
 Call by believing in Christ,) not from a-
 mong *the Jews only, but also of the*
Gentiles: Called, to receive that Grace
and Mercy, and to embrace those Advan-
tages of the Gospel; by rejecting of which,
the Jews became Vessels of Wrath fitted
to destruction. And We in like manner,
notwithstanding our being at present the
Vessels of Mercy, yet, if we live unwor-
thy of the same Advantages, the Apostle
bids us beware, least, since God spared
not the Jews, the natural branches; much
more he also spare not Us, who were but
ingrafted after Their Fall.

But, to enter into a more full and particular Explication of the Apostle's *whole* Discourse. In the *foregoing part* of this Epistle, he had shown at large, *that the Gentiles*, by corrupting themselves contrary to the Law of *Nature*, (*ch. i;*) and the *Jews* by disobeying the Law given them from *Heaven*, (*ch. ii;*) were *Both of them* become equally liable to the wrath of God: For that, God being no Respector of Persons, *as many as have sinned without the Law, shall perish without the Law; and as many as have sin-*
 ned

ned in the Law, shall be judged by the *Serm.*
Law, ch. ii, ver. 12. *XV.*

That therefore the insufficiency of 
Both these Laws, either to preserve men
from Sin, or to furnish them with suffi-
cient means of reconciliation after Sin ;
I say, the insufficiency of *Both* these Laws
evidently appearing : consequently both
Jews and *Gentiles* were obliged to be-
lieve in *Christ* ; embracing and obeying
the *grace* or *gracious Terms* of the Go-
spel, as the only Means of Justification
for the future, (*ch. iii.*) *For since all have*
sinned, and come short of the glory
of God, they can only be *justified*
freely by his Grace, through the Redemp-
tion that is in Jesus Christ, v. 24. That
is ; *All* being Sinners, they can none of
them claim Salvation by the merit of their
obedience, but merely through the gra-
cious pardon of Sin freely granted to pe-
nitents thro' Faith in Christ.

That this Justification by *Faith* with-
out *Works*, (that is, by the Obedience of
the *Gospel alone*, without the Ceremonies
of the *Law*,) *Was* abundantly *Sufficient* ;
because it was *the same*, by which *Abra-*
ham himself, the Father of the faithful,
had been justified, (*ch. iv* ;) *For the Pro-*
mise was not to Abraham or to his Seed
through

Serm. *through the Law (the Mosaick Law,)*

XV. *but through the righteousness of Faith,*
 ver. 13.

That This Justification by the Faith and Obedience of the *Gospel*, affords much greater assurance of present peace and reconciliation with God, and of eternal Life and Glory hereafter, than the *Law* could do, (*ch. v.) For if* (saith he) *when we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son; much more being now justified by his Blood, we shall be saved from Wrath thro' him,* ver. 9.

That this free justification by Grace through the Faith of the *Gospel*, without the Ceremonies of the *Mosaick* institution, obliges men to a stricter Obedience, to greater Purity and Holiness of Life, than the *Law* itself had done, (*ch. vi;) Christians being now made free from Sin, and become the Servants of righteousness; being dead unto Sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord,* ver. 11 and 18.

That the Law of *Moses*, was by no means able to deliver men from the bondage and slavery of Sin; from *forbearing* to do the *good* they *would*, and from *doing* the *evil* they *would not*; from the *Law* in their Body, warring against the *Law*

Law of their Mind, and bringing them Sermon. into Captivity to the Law of Sin and XV. Death, (ch. vii.) But that the Gospel, having delivered men from the Body of this Death, from the bondage of corruption into the glorious Liberty of the children of God; enabled them to prevail, not only over the Temptations of Sin within themselves, but also over all the Persecutions and all the Powers of the World, (ch. viii.) For the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the Law of Sin and Death. And Now, Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or Sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us, ver. 2 and 35.

The Apostle, I say, having largely proved these several Particulars in the first *Eight* Chapters of this Epistle; proceeds in this *Ninth* Chapter to answer a great *Prejudice* and strong *Objection*, which he foresaw would be raised by the *unbelieving Jews*, against what he had hitherto been pleading for. For, if his doctrine deliver'd in this Epistle was true,

Serm. true, the consequence was plain, that, who-
 XV. soever of the *Jews* rejected the Gospel;
 it would follow, notwithstanding their
 being *descended* from the *Patriarchs*, to
 whom all the *Promises* were made; not-
 withstanding their being the *peculiar peo-*
ple of God; notwithstanding that to *Them*
were committed the Prophecies and Ora-
cles of God; notwithstanding that to *Them*
pertained the adoption, and the glory, and
the Covenants, and the giving of the
Law, and the Service of God, and the
Promises; It would follow, that they
 were still *nevertheless* out of the Way of
 Salvation, in their most zealous Obser-
 vance of the ceremonial righteousness of
 the *Law*; unless they *believed* in *Christ*,
 and *obeyed* the *Gospel*, which is the *Righ-*
teousness of Faith. This the *Jews*
 thought to be an impossible Doctrine, and
 contrary to the Promises of God made
 to their Fathers the *Patriarchs*; and that
 therefore it was only an effect of the Apo-
 stle's *zeal* and *Prejudice* against them,
since his forsaking *Them*, and being con-
 verted to *Christianity*. To this Objec-
 tion therefore he replies at large, in this
Ninth chapter; by showing that there
 was no injustice in God, no breach of
 Promise, no change of his Will, in re-
 jecting

jecting the unbelieving Jews, and receiving in the Gentiles; since even *originally* the Promise was not made to *All* the children of *Abraham*, but to *Isaac* only; and not to *Both* the Sons of *Isaac*, but to *Jacob* only: And, of the Posterity of *Jacob*, *All were not Israel*, which were of *Israel*; but, in *Elijah's* days, seven thousand only were the true *Israel*; and, in the time of *Isaiah*, though the number of the children of *Israel* was as the sand of the Sea, yet a remnant only was to be saved; And, during the Whole period of the *Law*, God had mercy on whom he *would* have Mercy, and Compassion on whom he *would* have Compassion; *That is*, not on the whole people promiscuously, but on whom he himself pleased, who was the *Alone* competent Judge, and who *Alone* could infallibly distinguish such as were truly steadfast in their *Faith* or *Fidelity* towards him: And *whom he would*, he hardened; that is, out of obstinate and incorrigible Offenders, he chose whom he pleased, to make remarkable examples of his wrath and vengeance. Since this, saith the Apostle, was the Case *Originally*, and the method of God's proceeding *all along*: Much more at the coming of the *Messias*

Serm. into the World, who was the End of the
 XV. Law; might God justly reject and cast off
 ~~~~~ the Unbelievers; and reckon Those only  
 the true children of *Abraham*, who imi-  
 tated the Faith and Obedience of that  
 great Father of the Faithful: *Making*  
*known the riches of his glory*, as the  
 Text expresses it, *on the vessels of mercy,*  
*which he had afore prepared unto glory;*  
*Even US whom he has called, not of*  
*the Jews only, but also of the Gen-*  
*tiles.*

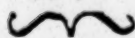
This being premised *in general*, and  
 the principal force of the Apostle's Argu-  
 ment explained; the several *Particulars*  
 of his discourse in this chapter, which  
 have often been so widely mistaken and so  
 strangely misapplied, may without much  
 difficulty be understood. In the *first five*  
*verses* he begins with an *Apology* for him-  
 self, that, in this whole doctrine concern-  
 ing the rejection of the *Jews*, he was  
 not at all influenced by any *Prejudice* or  
*Hatred* he had contracted against his coun-  
 try-men since his conversion to Christiani-  
 ty. So far from *that*, that on the con-  
 trary he calls God to witness in the most  
 solemn manner, that his grief and trou-  
 ble of Mind for their Impenitency and  
 In-

Incredulity, and for their consequent rejection, and the judgments God would send upon them; was much greater and more uneasy to him, than all the other afflictions and calamities he met with in the World. *I say the Truth in Christ* (says he,) *I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost; that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my Heart; For I could wish that MY SELF were accursed from Christ, for my brethren my kinsmen according to the flesh.* The expression is highly figurative and affectionate. And melancholy pious persons have sometimes been disturbed at it; as if *St Paul's* Wish was an inimitable flight of Affection: Whose example herein, if a Christian can in *no case* follow, he may be apt to accuse himself of want of Charity; and yet to follow it in *any case*, seems terrible even to the strongest affection, and shocking even to the most fervent Zeal. For tho' for a good man, as the same Apostle elsewhere expresses himself, one would even dare to *die*; yet for a man, upon any possible account whatsoever, to be content to become subject to the *Curse of God*, and to his *final displeasure*; this seems beyond the utmost bounds even of



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Christian Charity itself, either to desire or to be ever capable of being prevailed with to submit to. 'Tis certain therefore that the Meaning of the Apostle has been misunderstood; and that his intention in this passage, was not to wish himself subject to the *eternal wrath of God*, (which is absurd and impossible;) But, the wishing himself *accursed from Christ* for the sake of his own Nation and People, is to wish, that, if it were possible, he, by bearing *himself* those temporal judgments which he saw were coming upon *Them* on account of their being *accursed from Christ* through their obstinacy and incredulity, might restore them again to the Favour of God, and reinstate them in the Privileges of his peculiar people. *I could wish that MYSELF were accursed from Christ, for my brethren my kinsmen according to the Flesh.* So far (says he,) am I from bearing any *hatred* or *ill-will* to my own Nation the *Jews*, that on the contrary I could willingly suffer all the Calamities in the World in their stead, if thereby I could prevent their rejection, and their being *accursed from Christ*. And this high expression of his zeal and concern for his own Nation in the *Beginning* of his Discourse, is an undeniable De-

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*Demonstration*, that the *whole Argument* Sermon.  
itself, which follows in this chapter, does XV.  
not at all relate to any imaginary Predesti-  
nation of *Particular* persons to *eternal*  
*Happiness* or *Misery*; but that it wholly  
belongs to the rejection of the *NATION*  
of the *Jews*, for their infidelity; and the  
calling in of the *Gentiles*, by the Gospel.  
For, in *This* Sense, his Apology for him-  
self is very *pertinent* and apposite, and  
*necessary* to be premised in the Introdu-  
ction of a Discourse, which he foresaw must  
needs be so extremely ungrateful to the  
*whole Jewish Nation*. But according to  
the *Other* Interpretation of the Apostle's  
Argument, there can *no Sense* at all be  
made of this *Apology*. For since prede-  
stinate or reprobate persons, if of such he  
were speaking, were selected *irrespective-*  
*ly* both from among *Jews* and *Gentiles*;  
and, *who* the *particular persons* so selected  
were, could not at all be known in this life;  
it could not serve any imaginable purpose  
in *such* an Argument, to premise an *A-*  
*pology* concerning his great heaviness and  
continual sorrow of Heart for the reje-  
ction of his *own Nation* and Country-  
men, the *whole people* of the *Jews*.

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This *latter* therefore, being plainly his true Scope and Design ; he proceeds at the *6th* verse to show, that there was no injustice, no breach of promise in God, in rejecting the unbelieving *Jews*, and receiving in the *Gentiles* in their room ; forasmuch as the very *original* Promise to their Father *Abraham*, by which they were first intitled to become God's peculiar people, was not made promiscuously to *all* his Posterity, but to the children of the promise, the seed of *Isaac* only. Which was from the Beginning a Type and plain præfiguration, that God did not principally intend his promise, to take place in *Abraham's* Descendants according to the *Flesh* ; but in those who by a *Faith* or *Fidelity* like his, were in a truer and higher Sense the children and Followers, of that great Father of the Faithful. The Promise of God therefore is not at all made void by this new Dispensation : Nor can I in any wise be charged, says he, *as though* I supposed *the Word of God had taken none effect ; For they are not All Israel, which are Of Israel ; Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children ; But in I-*

*Isaac*



*Isaac shall thy seed be called ; That is, Serm. XV.*  
*They which are the children of the Flesh, these are not the children of God ; but the children of the promise, are counted for the Seed, ver. 8. So that, even according to the Original Intent of the promise made to Abraham, Christians of the Gentiles who imitated the Faith and moral Obedience of that Patriarch, were more truly his children, than his unbelieving Posterity according to the Flesh.*

The same Argument the Apostle further illustrates in the 10th verse, by a still more eminent Example. For, if, saith he, not only among the children of *Abraham*, but even among the Posterity of *Isaac* himself, (that Child of the Promise ; ) God was pleased to continue to make such a distinction, as to confine the Promise to *Jacob* in exclusion of *Esau*, even *before* Either of them was born into the World : Much more may God *Now*, without injustice, confine his promise to *such* only, who, after the Example of *Jacob*, believe in God, and obey his Will in what manner soever it be made known to them ; Exclusive of those, who continue in their Unbelief, and obstinately reject that only means of Salvation which God hath proposed to them :

Serm. Exclusive (I say) of these, notwithstanding  
 XV. ing that they be by descent the Posterity of  
 ~~~~~ *Jacob*, and in Other Respects equal to  
 them that Believe. And this is the full
 meaning of the following Words, v. 11.
*The children being not yet born, neither
 having done any good or evil; that the
 purpose of God according to election might
 stand, not of works, but of him that
 calleth; It was said unto Rebekah, The
 elder shall serve the younger; As it is
 written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau
 have I hated.*

That *the Purpose of God, according to
 election, might stand.* The only difficul-
 ty in this passage is, *What Purpose* of God
 the Apostle is here speaking of. Many
 have strongly imagined, that it is his Pur-
 pose of choosing some particular persons
 unconditionally to eternal Life, and o-
 thers to eternal Destruction. But the A-
 postle gives not the least Hint of any
 such thing. On the contrary, he explains
 himself in exprefs Words, that he means
 God's *Purpose of appointing the elder
 of Isaac's Sons to serve the younger; And
 This, not so much in their Persons, as
 in their national Posterity: And therefore
 no Wonder, that God made This Ap-
 pointment before they were yet born.* And
 the

the *Use* or *Application* the Apostle makes of this Instance, is, to prevent an Objection of the unbelieving *Jews*; Who since they could not deny but, notwithstanding all the Promises made to *Abraham* and *Isaac*, yet God might in This Sense, without any injustice, hate and reject *Esau*; consequently they could not reasonably charge God with any unrighteousness, in rejecting in like manner the unbelieving *Jews* also themselves. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. ver. 14.

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And to the same Purpose he urges, in the following verses, the Instances of what God declared to *Moses*, and what he did to *Pharaoh*. If of old God declared to *Moses*, that he would have mercy on whom he would have mercy, and would have compassion on whom he would have compassion; that is, would have compassion on men in what manner and upon what conditions he himself judged fit, who is certainly the most proper and the Only unerring Judge: For the same reason Now also, says the Apostle, neither is it of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, to choose for himself in what Method God shall bring men to

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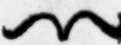
Serm. Salvation; (as the *unbelieving Jews* would
 XV. do, by adhering obstinately to the *ceremo-
 ~~~~~ nial* righteousness of the *Mosaick Law*:  
 But 'tis *of God* only, *that sheweth Mer-  
 cy*; 'tis *His* part only, to appoint in *what  
 manner*, to *whom*, and on *what conditions*,  
 he will shew it. Even in *Humane Judi-  
 catures*, should an *unskilful Spectator* take  
 upon him to find fault with the Sentence  
 of an *Able and Upright Judge*; might  
 not the Judge *well* express himself in this  
 manner: *I will acquit, whom I see fit  
 to acquit; and I will condemn, whom I  
 see fit to condemn?* Meaning, not that he  
 would do It *arbitrarily*; but that, as ha-  
 ving Alone the most perfect Knowledge of  
 the *Law* and of the *Fact*, his Sentence  
 ought not to be questioned by *unskilful  
 Spectators*.

Again: If *of old* God always reserved  
 to himself a Liberty of choosing likewise  
 out of incorrigible offenders, whom he  
 thought fit, to make publick and emi-  
 nent examples of his wrath and vengeance;  
 as in the instance of *Pharaoh*, whom  
 God hardned, (just in the same sense as  
 He is said to have *tempted David*, when  
 by his permission *Satan* tempted him,  
 2 *Sam.* xxiv, 1; and 1 *Chron.* xxi, 1.

God

God\* hardned *Pharaoh*, I say,) not by making or decreeing him to be wicked, (God forbid;) but, *being* wicked and incorrigibly obstinate, God raised him up or supported him in his Power, and deferred destroying him, and by many tryals made both his obstinacy and his punishment remarkable and conspicuous to the World, that he might shew his Power in him, and that his Name might be declared throughout all the Earth. If thus in all Former times, says the Apostle, God always reserved to himself this Power of choosing from among incorrigible offenders, whom he pleased, to make publick examples of his wrath; as in this instance of *Pharaoh*: for the same reason Now also, says he, neither is there any injustice in God, in choosing to make the impenitent and unbelieving *Jews*, (whom all his Judgments hitherto, and all his merciful and gracious invitations to embrace the Gospel,

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\* Thus *Deut.* xxix, 4, When *Moses* intended to expostulate with the *Israelites*, and to reprove them in the severest manner, for their *Wilful obstinacy and ingratitude*; he thus expresses it: *Ye have seen all that the Lord did* -----: *Yet the Lord hath not Given you an Heart to perceive, and Eyes to see, and Ears to hear, unto This day.* The Sense of these words of *Moses*, is exactly what at This day is vulgarly expressed by the term, *Graceless*.

have

Serm. have only *hardned*, instead of bringing  
 XV. them to Repentance;) there is no injustice in God in making *Them* Examples of his Severity and Wrath, notwithstanding their being the Posterity of *Abraham* according to the Flesh; at the same time that he resolves to have mercy upon as many of the *Gentiles*, as shall obey the Call by which he invites them to receive the Gospel.

Having thus cleared his main Argument, the Apostle proceeds in the 19<sup>th</sup> verse, to propose an *Objection*, which he foresaw the unbelieving Jews would make against the Doctrine he had been hitherto establishing. *Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? for Who hath resisted his Will?* If God resolves to cast us off and destroy us, as he did *Pharaoh*; why doth he yet blame us, for being so rejected? for, how can his Will be resisted? To this, He makes a two-fold Answer. *First*, by way of general Caution, ver. 20, 21; And *secondly*, by a particular and direct Reply, ver. 22, and in the Words of the Text. *First*, by way of general Caution, he reproves the rashness of replying presumptuously against God,

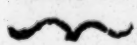


God, ver. 20; *Nay but, O man, Who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed, say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the Potter power over the Clay, of the same lump to make one Vessel to honour, and another to dishonour?* That is; not that God could originally create one man unconditionally to eternal Life, and another on purpose for eternal Misery; For this, if it were *possible* (as 'tis infinitely *impossible*) to be true, would yet be nothing at all to the Apostle's Argument concerning the Whole Nation of the *Jews*: But the plain meaning is (as appears from the express application of these passages in the 45<sup>th</sup> of *Isaiah* and the 18<sup>th</sup> of *Jeremiah*, from whence they are cited;) that God has as much *Power* and as much *Right*, to punish or reject *one* Nation or people, and receive or exalt *another*, upon what terms *he himself* judges to be most fit and reasonable; as the Potter has, to form and mould his clay, first into one Shape, and then into another. But *Secondly*, the Apostle answers further to the fore-mentioned Objection, by a particular and direct Reply; that the rejected Jews had no reason at all

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all to murmur against the Power and Will of God; for that though it was indeed *his* absolute Will and uncontrollable Power, to punish them *when and in what manner* he thought fit; yet it was *Their own* obstinacy and impenitency only, that made them liable to be so rejected and punished *at all*. Ver. 22, *What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his Power known, endured WITH MUCH LONG-SUFFERING the Vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?* The words, *with much long-suffering*, prove very clearly, that even the rejected *Vessels of Wrath* themselves were not destroyed, till God had first long waited even for *Their* Repentance and Amendment; which evidently shows, it was not *before* determined to be impossible. And then he adds in the words of the Text: *And that he might make known the Riches of his Glory on the Vessels of Mercy, which he had afore prepared unto Glory; Even US whom he has called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles.* The *Vessels of Mercy* therefore, are not *particular persons* chosen irrespectively; but *Us* whom he has called, that is, the *whole Body of Christians*, in opposition to the *whole*

whole Nation of the rejected unbelieving Jews. Which is also further evident from the Application he makes in the following verse, of the words of the Prophet: *As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people, and her beloved, which was not beloved: And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there shall they be called the children of the Living God.* And still more clearly, if possible, from the manner of his Summing up the whole Argument, ver. 30; *What shall we say then? that the Gentiles which followed not after Righteousness, have attained to Righteousness, even the Righteousness which is of Faith; But Israel which followed after the law of Righteousness, hath not attained to the Law of Righteousness: Wherefore? Because they sought it not by Faith, (that is, by embracing the Gospel,) but as it were by the Works of the Mosaick Law.* All which, he goes on yet further to explain and illustrate, in the whole 10th and 11th Chapters following. Which are so plain, that they need no Interpretation.

From



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From what has been said, we may draw the two following practical Observations.

1<sup>st</sup>, Such pious Persons, as are apt to be disturbed with melancholy apprehensions concerning their own State; fearing, that after all their sincerest and most earnest indeavours to obey the Will of God by a life of Virtue and true Holiness, they may yet possibly not be of the number of those *Vessels of Mercy, whom God has afore prepared unto Glory*; Such Persons, I say, may have their Doubts removed, by considering, that all those passages of Scripture, from which Some have earnestly endeavour'd to establish the Doctrine of absolute and unconditional decrees, do upon a careful consideration appear to have been greatly misinterpreted; and that by *the Vessels of Mercy, whom God had afore prepared unto Glory*, St Paul plainly means, not particular Persons chosen irrespectively out of the bulk of Mankind; but the *whole Body of Christians*, the universal Church of Christ, in opposition to the *whole People or Nation of the Jews*. The Election

(the *chosen people*) have obtained it, and *the rest were blinded.*

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2dly, On the other hand, such as are apt to be Presumptuous, and think themselves secure in the bare Profession of Christianity; upon account of the *whole Body of Christians* being stiled in Scripture, *the elect, the election, Vessels of Mercy*, and the like: These ought to take Notice, that in like manner as St *Paul*, out of the prophet *Isaiah*, observes that when the *whole Nation* of the Jews were the chosen and peculiar people of God, yet out of Them *a Remnant* only were to be finally saved; So *Now* also, though the whole Body of Christians, upon account of God's gracious Offers of Mercy to them in Christ, are stiled in Scripture *the election of grace*; yet Those only who live *worthy* of so excellent a Profession, by the Practise of true Virtue, Righteousness and Holiness, shall finally be made partakers of the Benefit thereof. For, as Christ *chose*, (the word in the Original is, *elected*) twelve disciples, and yet one of them proved a Devil and the Son of Perdition; so, notwithstanding that *all* Christians are the *Vessels of Mercy, prepared of God a-*

A a fore

Serm. *fore unto Glory* ; yet if any man *draws*  
XV. *back*, he shall lose the Benefit of that

Preparation ; and God will no longer  
*have any Pleasure* in him ; that is, he  
shall finally be rejected, and not be made  
partaker of the Salvation of the Go-  
spel.





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A

S E R M O N

Preach'd in the

PARISH-CHURCH

O F

*St James's Westminster,*

*On Sunday, Feb. 2, 1723.*

---

LUKE XVI, 12.

*And if ye have not been Faithful in  
That which is Another man's, who  
shall give you That which is your  
own?*

THESE words are the Conclusion of Serm.  
a Parable; in which our Lord shows XVI.  
us, that the Men of *This* world ~  
are generally more diligent, more skil-  
ful, and more true to their Own Interest,

A 2 2

in

Serm. in the purſuit of their *worldly* Deſigns  
XVI. than men who have the Knowledge of

the *True Religion*, and of the Happineſs of the *Life to come*, are in ſecuring to themſelves a Portion in That *eternal State*. And thence he exhorts his Diſciples, to learn Wiſdom *in this Particular*, even from *vitious* and *corrupt* men; to learn, even from *Their* Behaviour, to make the beſt Improvement of the Advantages they have in their Hands, and be as diligent in making Proviſion for the time to come, in Matters of *Eternal Concern*, as Others are in *Temporal*. The caſe he puts by way of Similitude is that of a *Steward*; who having embezzled his Lord's Goods, and finding he ſhould thereupon be removed from his Place, deliberates with himſelf what Courſe he had beſt to take for his future Subſiſtence. To *dig*, or earn his Bread by the Labour of his Hands, was what he had never been brought up to; To *Beg*, he was aſhamed. What he at laſt reſolved upon, was to do at preſent ſome conſiderable Acts of Generoſity to ſeveral of his Lord's Debtors; that afterwards, when he came to be diſcharged from his Place, he might find Some Support in the Returns of *Their* Gratitude: *Ver. 4, I am reſol-*

resolved *what to do; that, when I am put out of the Stewardship, they may receive me into their Houses.* Accordingly, Serm. XVI.

Accordingly, sending for his Lord's Debtors, he immediately *remits* to each of them a considerable Proportion of their Debt. Whether we are to suppose he did this *fraudulently*, in further Wrong to his Lord; or whether he did it *with Justice*, out of his own present Substance; is not material to the Intent of the Parable. What our Saviour *observes* upon it, is *This only*; that his *Lord commended him*, ver. 8, *because he had done wisely*: He commended his *Worldly Wisdom*, in securing to himself Friends against the day of Adversity. And the *Application* our Lord makes of it, is *This*: That, what All men, both just and unjust, acknowledge to be the great Instance of Wisdom in *Temporal* Affairs; the making provision beforehand against a time of Necessity: is really *much more* so, with regard to things *Eternal*. But in fact, 'tis in this *latter case* much more *rarely* put in *Practise*: For *the children of This World*, says he, *are in their generation wiser than the children of Light*. This Observation contains an affectionate *Reproof* of the *Remissness* of Christians, in not being



Serm. sufficiently sollicitous about their future  
 XVI. and *final* Interest: And there is included in it an earnest *Admonition to them*, to learn from the example even of an *unrighteous* World, to be true to their Principles; and to be as *Wise* in attending to *their own* Advantages, as *worldly men* are to *Theirs*. Learn, says he, even from the Similitude of the *Unjust Steward*, to *lay up* for yourselves a *Treasure* against the time to come, to *secure* to yourselves a *Refuge* against the day of Trial. *Make to yourselves Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness*; that *when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting Habitations*. He that is *Faithful in that which is least*, is *faithful also in much*; and *he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much*. If therefore you have not been faithful in the *unrighteous mammon*, who will commit to your Trust the *True Riches*? And if ye have not been faithful in *That which is Another man's*, who shall give you that which is your own? There is some little Obscurity in the Words, arising from the *manner of expression*; especially in that *latter part* of them, which are the words of *my Text*. But if we carefully consider their *True Sense*; they will

will appear to contain the *clearest Reasoning*, and the *strongest and most noble Argument* in the World. Serm. XVI.

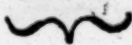
In the *first* place 'tis to be observed, that the words, *unrighteous mammon*, with which our Lord here exhorts his Disciples to make to themselves Friends, do not signify *Riches UNJUSTLY gotten*, Riches which men have *no RIGHT at all to possess*; but which they have *no Lasting, no certain, no Secure and Permanent Right to*; *no Right of perpetuity of Enjoyment*. For they are expressly opposed, not as *unjust or ill-gotten*, to *just or well-gotten* Riches; but as *False and Deceitful*, they are here opposed to the *True Riches*; and as *insecure transitory Possessions*, to *Everlasting Habitations*.

In the *Next* place 'tis to be observed, that the words, *He that is Faithful in that which is LEAST, is Faithful also in MUCH*; are a comparison between the *Present Life*, and the *Future*. *He*, and *He only*, who, in the State of Tryal *Here*, shows his *Fidelity* in a *Small Trust*; shall *Hereafter* have intrusted to him an unspeakably *Larger and more permanent Possession*. Thus our Lord explains himself in the Parable of the Talents, *Matt.*

Serm. 25, 21 ; *Well done, thou good and Faithful*  
 XVI. *Servant ; Thou hast been Faithful*  
 over a Few things, I will make thee  
*Ruler over Many things ; Enter thou*  
*into the Joy of thy Lord.* Or, as he ex-  
 presses it in *Luke 19, 17 ; Well, thou good*  
*Servant ; because thou hast been Faith-*  
*ful in a very Little, have thou Autho-*  
*rity over Ten Cities.*

Lastly, 'tis to be observ'd (which in-  
 deed is the principal difficulty in the  
 Text ; ) that the words, *Who shall give*  
*you That which is your Own ?* do not  
 signify, That which is *Already* your own,  
 but that which *is to be* ; that which,  
 when once given you, *WILL* be your  
 own for a *Perpetual and Unalienable*  
*Possession.* If ye have not been *Faith-*  
*ful in that which is Another man's,*  
 in that which you knew was only a  
*Trust* committed to you, and commit-  
 ted to you only for a very short time ;  
 how then can you be fit to be intrusted  
 with a *Possession for Perpetuity* ? If in a  
 matter wherein you knew you must be  
 called to account, and knew not every  
 day but *the very next* might be the day  
 of accounting, you have still ventured  
 presumptuously to be Unfaithful ; how  
 are ye fit to be intrusted with *Power*  
 and



and a *KINGDOM*, with Power in *your* Sermon.  
*Own Property*, with a Possession *secure* XVI.  
 and of *unchangeable Duration*? 

Thus the *Sense* of our Lord in this whole Discourse, is exceeding *clear*; and the Argument on which he builds his Admonition, *strong* and *affectionate*. Learn, says he, *one part* of *true Wisdom*, even from *worldly*, even from *unrighteous* men. The *unjust Steward* in the *Parable*, foreseeing he should not long possess his Stewardship, had Wisdom enough to make *some sort of Provision* for himself, against the Day of Adversity. Ye also, says our Lord, are *Stewards*, entrusted with a small treasure, for a very uncertain, but certainly very short, Time. *This Treasure*, to which you have no *lasting Right*, no *continuing Title*; make to yourselves Friends with it, *Now*. Employ it in such a manner, in things innocent and virtuous, in ways just and righteous, in works useful and charitable; that *hereafter*, when this *transitory life* shall *fail*, ye may be found worthy to be *received into everlasting Habitations*. To obtain a Portion in those *everlasting Habitations*, there is no other possible way, but by being found faithful in this *Temporary Trial*. For *He*  
*that*

Serm. *that is Faithful in Little*, may reasonably be depended upon, that he will be  
 XVI. *Faithful also in Much*; But *He that is Unjust* in the *Least* thing, can with no reason expect to be trusted with what is *Greater*. *If therefore*, says our Lord, *ye be not faithful* in a Trust of so *short* continuance, as the *present* time is; how are ye fit to have committed to you the *True* and *Eternal Riches*? *And if ye be not faithful in That which is Another's*, and for which ye are *accountable* every moment; how is it fit ye should be trusted with a *permanent* Treasure, a Treasure to continue in your *own Power*, in your *own proper and unalienable Possession*?

Having thus at large explained the *words*, and illustrated the *Argument* used by our Lord in the Text; it remains that I deduce from thence some *Doctrinal* Observations, which may be of Use to us in *Practice*. And

1<sup>st</sup>. 'Tis obvious to observe, that What our Lord here argues, both in the Parable and in the Application of it, with regard to the use of *Riches* in particular; is equally applicable, and intended to be applied, to *every other* Advantage or Ability whatsoever. *Authority, Honour, Power, Knowledge; every Opportunity* in

in Life, of having *Influence* upon Men ; Sermon.  
may, as well as *Riches*, be either made use of to the Glory of God, and the promoting of Virtue ; or may be abused to Other, and Contrary Purposes. The *Ground* of our Lord's Exhortation in the Text, is the *Same* with regard to *All* these things ; and may, with *equal Reason*, be applied to them *All*. They are *All of them*, in the present Life, of very short ; *all of them*, of equally uncertain continuance. They are *all of them* committed to us, as to *Stewards* during pleasure ; *all of them*, what we are *accountable for*, every moment. What have we then to do, according to *Any* measures of *Wisdom and Prudence* ; but to employ all these things faithfully to *Such Purposes here* in this *transitory* life, as may *hereafter* be a Foundation for our being *received into everlasting Habitations* ? For if, in the use of *Any* of these Abilities, we be not at present *Faithful* in *That which is Another's* ; in *That* which Now for a *short* time only, is committed to us upon *Trust*, and upon *Account*, from *Another* : How can we reasonably expect to have them hereafter *given* to us for *Our Own*, for an unalienable and everlasting Possession ?

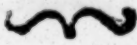
2dly,



Serm. 2dly, A *Second* doctrinal Observation  
 XVI. arising from our Saviour's Argument in  
 the Text, is ; that the *present life* is a  
*Tryal* of mens *Fidelity*, a *Probation* of  
 their *Fitness* for a *future and more lasting*  
*State*. *He that is faithful in that which*  
*is Least, is Faithful also in Much ; and*  
*He that is unjust in the Least, is un-*  
*just also in Much*. If therefore, (says he)  
 ye be not Faithful in a *Temporary Trust*,  
 Who shall think fit to give you an *Eter-*  
*nal Inheritance*? What *Moses* said to the  
*Israelites* concerning their *Passage thro'*  
*the Wilderness* to the *Promised Land*,  
*Deut. viii, 2 ;* is exactly parallel to the  
 present case. *Thou shalt remember all the*  
*way which the Lord thy God led thee*  
*these forty years in the Wilderness, to*  
*bumble thee, and to PROVE thee, to*  
*KNOW what was in thine heart, whe-*  
*ther thou wouldst keep his Command-*  
*ments, or no*. The meaning is ; not, that  
 God wants *information*, or tries men with  
 regard to *Himself*, who knoweth all  
 things: But with regard to *Them*, he proves  
 and exercises their *Virtue*; the *Habits* of  
 which, *essentially* and in the *Nature* of  
 things, are *produced* and *improved* no  
 otherwise than by *Acts*. In the *Fabrick*  
 of the *Natural* and *Material World*, eve-  
 ry

ry thing is, by the *Necessity of its Nature*, exactly and invariably what the Creator made it : Nor can any of *These things* possibly, by *Any* Power of Nature, either *improve* or *destroy* their own originally implanted Perfections. But in the *Moral* world, of intelligent and rational Creatures ; the Case is just the *Reverse*. The very *Essence* of *Virtue* consists, in being *freely chosen*. And had not God so constituted *Moral Agents*, as to make *Their* Goodness or Badness depend upon the *Habits* they should acquire by their *own free Acts* ; he had in the very Act of Creation destroyed his own Design, and had not made them at all *Moral Agents*. Consequently, (which is the *Noblest* Part of the Idea of God,) he had neither been *King* nor *Judge* nor *Governour* of the World, but merely as an *Artificer* of a *Great Machine*. A *Machine* ; in the Fabrick of which, he *has* indeed displayed, by an infinite variety of the most surprising Effects, *Wisdom unfathomable*, and *Power inexhaustible*. But 'tis all *merely* for the sake of the *Inhabitants*, whom he has placed therein, capable of contemplating this divine Workmanship. For otherwise, the whole Fabrick of the Earth and Heavens ; beautiful, great, and glo-

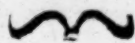
Serm. glorious as it is ; is yet *in itself*, (being  
 XVI. lifeless, void of all Sense and Knowledge,  
 ~~~~~ and not so much as Conscious of its own  
 Existence,) less valuable than the meanest
 single Animal in the Universe. And *to-*
gether with an infinite variety of creatures
 indued *merely* with *life, sense, and mo-*
tion ; 'tis still comparatively as Nothing ;
 'tis still really of less Value, than *One Ra-*
tional, Intelligent, Free, Moral Agent,
 capable of *Knowing*, capable of *Contem-*
plating and *Acknowledging*, capable of
Imitating, in its *degree* and *measure*, the
 Perfections of its Great Creator. For
 the Sake of *These* therefore, the World
 was created. And *These* God cannot
 but govern in ways suitable to *There* na-
 ture, as he governs the *material* World
 in a way suitable to *Its* nature. *These*
 he cannot but dispose into different Sta-
 tions, proportionable to their *Moral* Ca-
 pacities and Improvements ; in like man-
 ner as, in the *Natural* World, he has ad-
 justed every thing in *Weight and Mea-*
sure. In the *One*, appears the Skill and
 Wisdom of an All-powerful *Artificer* ;
 In the *Other alone*, appears the Glory
 and Majesty of a Supreme *King*, and the
 Righteousness of an All-seeing and un-
 erring *Judge*. This is the manifest Voice
 of

of *Nature and Reason*; and This is the Sermon.
 exprefs and constant Declaration of *Scripture*. XVI.
 All sorts of *Abilities, Powers,* 
 and *Capacities* whatsoever, wherewith
 God has at present indued men; *Riches,*
Honour, Authority, Wisdom, Knowledge,
 and the like; are by our Saviour, in his
 Parable of the *Talents*, represented as so
 many particular *Trusts*, committed to
 mens Charge in This World; as *Tryals* of
 their *Fidelity*, in way of *Probation* of
 their *Fitness* for a *Better and more Last-*
ing State. They who employ not these
 Abilities to *Virtuous* Purposes, in promo-
 ting *Truth* and *Righteousness* in the
 World; are the *wicked and slothful Ser-*
vant, to whom his Lord said, *Thou ought-*
est to have put my Money to the Exchan-
gers, and then at my coming I should have
received mine own with Usury: Take
therefore the Talent from him;----- and
cast ye the unprofitable Servant into outer
darkness; there shall be weeping and gna-
shing of Teeth, Matt. 25, 27. On the
 contrary: They who, according to their
 respective Abilities, employ the different
Powers (*whatsoever* they be) wherewith
 God has intrusted them, in promoting the
Glory of God, and the *Practise of Vir-*
tue in the World; These are the Ser-
 vants,

Serm. vants, who, in trading with *five* talents,
 XVI. having gained *five* more; and with *two*
 talents, having gained *Other two*; their
 Lord said to each of them in his Proportion; *Well done, thou good and faithful Servant; Thou hast been Faithful over a Few things, I will make thee Ruler over Many things: Enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord.* In the language of my Text: *Thou hast been Faithful in That which is Another man's*, in That small and short Trust which I committed to thy Charge; I will Now therefore give thee a Possession, which shall be in Property *thy Own*, thy Own for an unalienable and everlasting Inheritance. In the 24th ch. of *St. Matthew*, v. 42. our Lord expresses the same thing *still* more strongly: *Watch therefore*, says he, *and--- be Ye also ready; for in such an hour as you think not, the Son of man cometh. Who then is a faithful and wise Servant, whom his Lord has made Ruler over his Household, to give them Meat in due Season? Blessed is That Servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing: Verily I say unto you, that he shall make him Ruler over All his Goods.* 'Tis in allusion to This Notion, of the present life being a
 Tryal

Tryal of mens *Fidelity*, or of their *Fitness* for a *better State*; that St Paul, when the End of his days drew near, declares concerning himself, *2 Tim.* iv, 7, *I have fought a good fight, --- I have kept the Faith*; (I have preserved my *Fidelity*, or shown my self *Faithful* in my *Trust*;) *Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness.* And in the former Part of his Life, describing his Care in the Government of himself and of his own Passions, *1 Cor.* ix, 27, *I keep under my Body*, says he, *and bring it into Subjection*; *least that by any means, when I have preached to Others, I myself should be a Cast-away*: in the Original it is, *I my self should be* [αδόκιμος] found *Not proof*; not *proof* against the Temptations of the *present World*; not *meet for the USE*, for the *Employment*, for the *Station* intended me in the *Life to come*. For, (as he in another place expresses this matter by a most apt similitude;) *in a great House, there are*, says he, *not only Vessels of Gold and of Silver, but also of Wood and of Earth*; *and some to Honour, and some to Dishonour.* If a man therefore purge himself from These, (from ungodly Works and Doctrines mentioned in the former

Serm.
XVI.



Serm. part of the chapter;) *he shall be a Vessel unto*
 XVI. *Honour, sanctified and meet for the Master's*
 Use, and prepared unto every good Work.

The *Principal* method, in which the unsearchable Wisdom of God has *most frequently* been pleased to *Try* the *Fidelity* of his *Best* and most eminent Servants, has been by *Afflictions* and *Persecutions* of various kinds: *Proving* them, whether, in case of *Competition*, they would *stedfastly* prefer the *Interest* of *Truth* and *Virtue*, in opposition to all the *Advantages*, and to all the *Sufferings* too, of this *present* Life. *Who-soever* (says our Lord) *does not bear his Cross, and come after me; cannot be my Disciple*, Luke xiv, 27. And hence it is, that in Scripture we so frequently find the *Trial* of mens *Fidelity*, compared to the purifying and *Trying* of *Metals* by *Fire*. *Many shall be purified and made white, and tried*, Dan. xii, 10. *And they that understand among the People, shall instruct many; yet they shall fall by the Sword and by Flame, by Captivity and by Spoil: ----- And Some of Them of Understanding shall fall, to Try them, and to purge, and to make them white.* Thus again, *Is. lxviii, 10. Behold, I have refined*

Dan. xi,
33.

refined thee, but not with Silver; I have Serm.
 chosen thee in the Furnace of Affliction. XVI.
 I will refine them, as Silver is refined; Zech. xlii,
 and will try them, as Gold is tried. 9.

And Job xxiii, 10; He knoweth the way
 that I take: When he has tried me, I
 shall come forth as Gold. The Later
 Writers, of the Books of *Wisdom* and
Ecclesiasticus, apply the same similitude
 with great justness of Thought, and elo-
 quence of Expression. Gold is tried in Ecclus. ii,
 the Fire, and Acceptable men in the Fur-5.
 nace of Adversity. The Souls of the
 Righteous are in the Hand of God, and Wisd. iii,
 there shall no Torment touch them. Ha-5.
 ving been a little chastised, they shall be
 greatly rewarded; for God PROVED
 them, and found them worthy for Him-
 self. As Gold in the Furnace has he
 Tried them, and received them as a Burnt-
 Offering. In the New Testament, the
 same figure of speaking, is continued in
 the same Sense. Our Saviour, in his
 Exhortation to the Christian Church in
 That Period of time, which is represen-
 ted by the Church of *Smyrna*: Behold,
 (says he,) the Devil (the Spirit of False
 Accusation) shall cast some of you into
 prison, that ye may be TRIED: -----
 Be thou faithful unto Death, and I will
 give

Serm. *give thee a Crown of Life*, Rev. ii, 10.

XVI. And at *another time*: *Because* (says he)

thou hast kept the word of my Patience,
 ch. iii, 10. *I also will keep Thee from* (or carry thee
safely through) the Hour of Temptation,
which shall come upon all the World, to
TRY them that dwell upon the Earth.---

Him that overcometh, (that is, who shall
 be found *Faithful* in that Hour of Tryal,
 notwithstanding all the Allurements and
 all the Terrors of an unrighteous World;
 Him) *will I make a PILLAR in the*
Temple of my God: A PILLAR, or
 Eminent Part, of *That Living Temple of*
God, of which the *Twelve Apostles* are
 (by a most beautiful and expressive meta-
 phor) represented as being the *twelve
 * Rev. xxi, *Foundation-Stones*, or * *Rocks* on which
 14. & Mat. it is built; and *Jesus Christ* himself the
 xvi, 18. *chief corner-stone*, by which the *Whole*
Building is compact together. With a
 View to These and the like Promises it

is, that St *James* declares: *Blessed is the*
man that endureth Temptation; for when
he is TRYED, he shall receive the

Crown of life. And St *Peter*: *That*
 1 Pet. i, 7. *the TRYAL* (saith he) *of your Faith,*
 (of your *Fidelity* or *Faithfulness*,) *being*
much more precious than of Gold that
perisheth, though it be tried with Fire,
 might

might be found unto praise and honour and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

Serm.
XVI.

3dly. A *Third* doctrinal Observation, obviously arising from the fore-going, and of great Use in Practice ; is This. If the *present life* is a *Tryal* of mens *Fidelity*, a *Probation* of their *Fitness* for a *Future* and *more Lasting State* ; then every *erroneous Notion*, which is of *such* a nature, as leads men to rely upon *Any Equivalent* whatsoever, instead of employing *faithfully* those *Talents*, where-with God has intrusted them, in promoting his Kingdom of *Truth* and *Righteousness* ; must needs be a *Fatal Deceit*. If men content themselves barely with a *zealous Profession* of the *true Religion*, and a diligent avoiding of all *false opinions* in *Speculation* : If they rely entirely upon a regular Observance of those merely *External Duties* of Religion, which were appointed of God as *Obligations* and *Assistances* to *True Virtue* : If they satisfy themselves with that *Sorrow for Sin*, and *Fear of Punishment* upon the Approach of Eternity, which is vulgarly called a *Death-bed-Repentance* : If they depend upon any *absolute Decree* of God, or

Serm. upon any application of the *Merits* of
 XVI. *Christ*, to save them, not *from*, but in
 ~~~~~ their *Sins*: If they expect to be saved by  
 their *Faith*, meaning thereby mere *Credulity*, instead of *Fidelity* or *acting*  
*Faithfully* upon the Principles they profess: In these and all other Cases whatsoever, which can possibly be reconciled with *vitious* and *immoral* Practise; our Saviour will say unto them, *Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity*. For if ye have not been *Faithful* in a small and temporary *Trust*, how is it fit I should give you a *Kingdom* to be *your Own* for ever?

4thly and *Lastly*: From what has been said, it appears, that the principal *Difference* of men, in *God's* estimation, consists not so much in the *Number* of the *Talents* committed to them, as in the *Degree* of their *Fidelity*, or the *Good Use* they make of them. For, *Many that are First shall be Last, and the Last First*. And to *Him* who with *two Talents* gained *two* more, as well as to *Him* who with *Ten Talents* gained *other Ten*, our Lord says; "Well done, thou good and faithful Servant, Enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord: For he that is

“ is Faithful in *Little*, is Faithful also in Sermon.  
“ *Much*: Wherefore since thou hast been XVI.  
“ Faithful in that which is *Another man's*,  
“ in That short and small Trust which I  
“ committed to thy charge; I will there-  
“ fore give thee a Treasure and Inheri-  
“ tance which shall be *thine Own*, thine  
“ *Own* for an unalienable and everlast-  
“ ing Possession.”





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A  
S E R M O N

Preach'd in the  
PARISH-CHURCH  
O F

*St James's Westminster,*

On *Sunday, Feb. 16, 1723.*

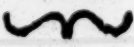
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LUKE XVII, 37.

*And they answered and said unto him:  
Where, Lord? And he said unto them,  
Wheresoever the Body is, thither will  
the Eagles be gathered together.*

THESE words are a Proverbial  
Saying, used by our Lord upon  
*two* different Occasions. Once  
in *This place*, upon occasion of the Pha-  
risees demanding of him, *ver. 20, WHEN*  
*the*

Serm.  
XVII.



Serm. *the Kingdom of God should come.* And  
 XVII. *again in the 24th of St Matthew, upon*  
 ~~~~~ *occasion of his Disciples asking him,*  
WHEN shall these Things be? and
What shall be the Sign of thy coming and
of the End of the World? In this *Latter*
place, our Lord, in answer to the Que-
tion put to him by his Disciples, gives
them a large Prophetick Description of
the destruction of the City and Nation
of the Jews, by the Power of the Ro-
mans; and a long Series of Other Events,
which were to be accomplished before
his coming to Judgment. And because
he is very particular and distinct in That
Part of the Prophecy, which relates to
the destruction of Jerusalem by the Ro-
mans, whose Armies carried an Eagle
for their Ensign; therefore the Gener-
ality of Expositors have understood the
Meaning of the words of my Text to be,
that wheresoever the Jews were, thither
would the Roman Armies be gathered
together to destroy them. But This Sense
of the words seems low; and the Allusion
to be far-fetched; and the Application of
them, too much confined; and their
Connexion in the whole Discourse, very
difficult to be made out. For our Lord,
in the Place where these words come in,
 in

in *St Matthew's* Gospel, as well as in That of *St Luke*, is not speaking of the *Romans* destroying the *Jews*; (for, *That Part of his Prophecy* he had *finished*, several Verses before:) But he is speaking, in *One* of these places, concerning the unreasonableness of *looking for Christ's Coming* in *Any particular Part* of the World, in *the Desert*, or in the *Secret Chambers*, or in *Any One Place* rather than another. And in the *Other* place, he is speaking concerning the *righteous Judgment* of God, *distinguishing* persons from each other in the *Highest degree*, between whom in all *Worldly Appearance* there was *No Distinction*. The true Sense therefore of the words of the Text, must be gathered, not from any *remote Allusion* in the single word, *Eagles*; but from the *immediate Connexion* of the intire Sentence, in the Discourse wherein it is joined; and from the *natural Signification* of the whole *Proverbial Saying*, considered as *Proverbial*.

There are several Instances in Scripture, of *Other* Proverbial Sayings, inserted in like manner as This in the Text; very usual at the *Time*, and in the *Language*, wherein they were spoken; so as
to

Serm.

XVII.

Serm. to be as easily and as perfectly understood
 XVII. by the *Vulgar*, as the most *literal* Ex-
 ~~~~~ pressions whatsoever. Thus *Ezek.* xviii,  
 2, *The Fathers have eaten Sowre Grapes,*  
*and the Childrens Teeth are set on Edge:*  
 There was no man among the *Jews*, even  
 of the meanest capacity, but at first Hear-  
 ing understood those words to mean, that  
*the Children were punished for the Trans-*  
*gressions of their Fore-Fathers.* Thus  
 when *St Paul* tells us, that *Whatsoever*  
*a man soweth, That shall he also reap,*  
*Gal.* vi, 7 : Every even the lowest Under-  
 standing immediately apprehends them to  
 mean, that, according to mens behaviour  
 Here, whether virtuous or vitious, so  
 shall their Reward be, or their Punish-  
 ment, hereafter. Again : When our  
 Lord says, *Matt.* vii, 16, *Men do not*  
*gather Grapes of Thorns, or Figs of*  
*Thistles;* his Sense is no less obvious,  
 and his Words even more expressive, than  
 if he had said directly, that Virtuous Ac-  
 tions cannot reasonably be expected to  
 flow from Corrupt Principles, or from  
 vitious and debauched Minds. The *Pro-*  
*verbial Expression* in my *Text*, being  
 founded upon a Similitude *less Common*  
 in our *Modern* language, then These be-  
 fore-mentioned ; the Sense of it, for  
 That

That reason, does not to an English Reader, at first Sight, appear so obvious. But with a *little Attention* to the *general Nature of Proverbial Sayings*, it is very easy to be understood. The *Nature of a Proverb* is, to contain in *one single Sentence* a *Similitude*, or *Comparison of Two things* with each other; and, under the Instance of some *one particular Example*, to conclude some *more general or Universal Truth*. This is evidently the Case, in the *Other* Instances I produced: And so it is likewise in *This* Expression in my *Text*. *Wheresoever the Body is, thither will the Eagles be gathered together. Wheresoever the Prey is, thither will the BIRDS of Prey flock towards it. Wheresoever the Case is the same*, (whatsoever be the Subject spoken of;) *there also the general Observation* upon the Case, (whatsoever That Observation be,) will have the *same Justness and Truth*. *Wheresoever the State of things is the same, and the Circumstances alike; there also will the Event, in Any Place, or at Any Time, be proportionally alike.*

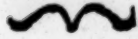
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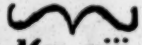
Serm.

XVII.



ver. 3.

This is plainly the *Sense* of the words, as it arises from the Consideration of the *General nature* of a *Proverbial* Expression. And from the consideration of the *Particular connexion* of the words with those immediately foregoing, in *Each* of the Passages in the *Two Gospels* where the *same words* occur; it still more *evidently* appears to be the *True Sense* of them. In the 24<sup>th</sup> chapter of *St Matthew's Gospel*, (and the same thing is recorded likewise in the 13<sup>th</sup> of *St Mark*, and in the 21<sup>st</sup> of *St Luke*;) the disciples had asked our Lord, *WHEN shall these things be? When shall all these things come to pass, which thou hast so often foretold to us? And What shall be the Sign of thy Coming, and of the End of the World?* The Ground of their Question, was; that, upon the dissolution of the Jewish State and Government, which he had told them was approaching; they expected the *Kingdom of Christ* should *immediately* be set up, in some *remarkable manner*, in some *particular Place*. In *Answer* to their *Question*, and in order to *rectify* this their *mistake*; our Lord tells them, that not only the City and Temple of Jerusalem should be destroyed, and

and the Jewish Nation dispersed ; but Serm.  
 that, after This, there should still succeed XVII.  
 a long Train of Calamities, and *the End*   
 should *not be yet*. For *Jerusalem* should <sup>Mar. xiii,</sup>  
*be trodden down of the Gentiles, till the* <sup>7.</sup>  
*Times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.* And, <sup>Luke xxi,</sup>  
 during That long Period of time, in <sup>24.</sup> Other  
 parts of the World likewise, Nation should  
 rise against Nation, and Kingdom against <sup>Mat. xxiv,</sup>  
 Kingdom ; and there should be Famines <sup>7.</sup>  
 and Pestilences and Earthquakes in divers  
 places. And that even all *These* calami-  
 ties, comparatively speaking, should be  
 but the *Beginning of Sorrows*. For, a  
 Deluge of Corruption and *Iniquity* should <sup>ver. 12.</sup>  
 overspread the World. And there should  
 be very great and very long *Persecutions*: <sup>ver. 9, 10.</sup>  
 And a time of *Tribulation*, such as had  
 not been *since the Beginning of the* <sup>ver. 21.</sup>  
*World*. And that, during This time, *the*  
*Gospel* should *be preached in all the World*, <sup>ver. 14.</sup>  
*for a Witness unto all Nations*. And  
 his Conclusion of the Whole, is : that  
 therefore his Disciples ought not to look  
 for the *Kingdom of Christ*, as a Domini-  
 on to be set up at any particular Time  
 or Place : But in *all times*, and at *all*  
*places* alike, *wheresoever* and *whenssoever*  
 the Doctrine of Christ is received and  
 practised, *wheresoever* and *whenssoever* any  
 number

Serm. number of sincere Believers (whether *Many* or *Few*) be gathered together in His  
 XVII. *Name*, *There* (says he) is the Kingdom  
 of Christ. Ver. 23, *If any man shall say*  
*unto you, Lo, Here is Christ, or There;*  
*believe it not. For there shall arise False*  
*Christs and False Prophets, and shall*  
*shew great Signs and Wonders.----- Be-*  
*hold, I have told you before. Where-*  
*fore, if they shall say unto you, Behold,*  
*he is in the Desert, go not forth: Be-*  
*hold, he is in the secret chambers; believe*  
*it not. For as the Lightning cometh*  
*out of the East, and shineth even unto*  
*the West; so shall also the Coming of the*  
*Son of Man be. For wheresoever the*  
*Carcase is, there will the Eagles be ga-*  
*thered together.* The Sense evidently is  
 This. As, in *all Places* equally, and at  
*all Times*, wheresoever the *Lightning* is,  
*There* does the *Light* of it shine forth;  
 and wheresoever the *Prey* is, *thither* do  
 the *Birds of Prey* resort: So, at what  
*Time* or *Place* soever the *Doctrine of*  
*Christ* is received, and practised according  
 to His Directions, *There* is the *Kingdom*  
*of Christ.*

In the *Other* passage, where the same  
 words are *again* repeated, (which is,  
 Luke



Luke xvii, 37, the words of my Text;) Sermon.  
 there likewise their *connexion* in the XVII.  
 Thread of our Lord's Discourse, clearly  
 shows them to have the *Like* signification.  
 The Manner in which they are *There* intro-  
 duced, is This. *Ver. 20; And when he*  
*was demanded of the Pharisees, WHEN*  
*the Kingdom of God should come; he an-*  
*swered them, and said: The Kingdom of*  
*God cometh not with Observation. Nei-*  
*ther shall they say, Lo Here, or Lo*  
*There: For, behold, the Kingdom of God*  
*is Within (or Among) you. And he said*  
*unto the Disciples; The days will come,*  
*when-----they shall say unto you, See*  
*here, or see there; Go not after them,*  
*nor follow them.* That is: Think not that  
 the Kingdom of Christ is to be distin-  
 guished under the character of any parti-  
 cular *Time* or *Place*, or to be known by  
 any *External Notes* or *Marks*; But un-  
 derstand, that it is in *all Places* and at  
*all Times* the same; distinguished, *al-*  
*ways* and *every where* alike, by its own  
*intrinsic essence* only; just as the Shining  
 of *Lightning* is one and the same, from  
 one end of Heaven to the other. After  
 which, he proceeds to warn them, *ver.*  
*26; that as, in the days of Noah, and*  
*in the days of Lot, men were negligent*  
 C c and

Serm. and secure, having their Thoughts entire-  
 XVII. ly taken up with their present Business,  
 ~~~~~ their Ambition, their Covetousness, and  
 their Pleasures; till, on a sudden, the
Deluge of Water swept them all away
 in the *one* case; and *Lightning from*
Heaven, joined with an *Earthquake*,
 destroyed and consumed them in the *o-*
ther case: *Even thus* (says he) *shall it*
be in the day when the Son of man is re-
vealed. And then he concludes, in the
 words preceding my Text, *ver. 34, I*
tell you, in That Night there shall be two
men in One Bed; the One shall be ta-
ken, and the other left. Two women
shall be grinding together; the one shall
be taken, and the other left. Two men
shall be in the Field; the one shall be
taken, and the other left. The Mean-
 ing is: In the *righteous* and unerring
Judgment of God the Searcher of
 Hearts, many persons shall finally be *dis-*
tinguished from each other in the *Highest*
Degree, between whom in all *World-*
ly Appearance there was *No distinction.*
ver. 37. And they said unto him, Where, Lord?
And he said unto them, Wheresoever the
Body is, thither will the Eagles be ga-
thered together. That is to say: Your
 Question is of No moment: 'Tis all one,
 where-

wheresoever and *whensoever* the same thing comes to pass. Difference of Time and Place, makes no difference at all in God's account and estimation, either of Things or Persons. Where-ever the Case is the same, and the *Circumstances* alike; *there* also will the *Event* be proportionably the *Same*. At what *Times* and in what *Places* soever, the Persons to be judged shall be found endued with the like diversity of Qualifications; *there* also shall the impartial and unerring Judgment of God the Searcher of Hearts, distinguish them with the like Distinction.

Watch ye therefore (says our Lord) *and pray* Luke xxi,
always, that ye may be accounted worthy 36.
to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man. And what I say unto You, I say Mark xiii,
unto All; Watch. 37.

Having thus fully and at large explained the true Signification of the words of the Text: The *Observations* I shall draw from thence, are briefly as follows.

1st. That, generally speaking, *All* the *Admonitions* and *Instructions* given by our Saviour to his *Disciples* at different

Serm. Times and upon different Occasions, were
 XVII. intended by him to be applied (allowing
 ~~~~~ for particular differences of Circumstances) to *All Christians at all times and in all places.* Concerning things recorded in the *Old Testament* even from the *remotest* times, St Paul declares, that *Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for Our learning; that We, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have Hope,* Rom. xv, 4. When the Scripture tells us, that *Abraham's Faith* was *imputed to him for Righteousness*, Gen. xv, 6; Rom. iv, 22, *It was not written* (says the Apostle) *for His sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for Us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead:* That is, if *We* act with the same *Fidelity* upon the Principles of *Our Profession*, as *He* did upon *His*. On the other hand, when we find recorded in Scripture the severe *Punishments* inflicted upon the Children of *Israel* in the Wilderness, for their repeated Acts of Disobedience; *All these things* (says he) *happened unto Them for Examples,* 1 Cor. x, 11; *and they are written for Our Admonition, upon whom*  
 the

*the Ends of the World are come.* Now Serm.  
if This be so ; much more may our Sa- XVII.  
*viour's Instructions and Admonitions to* ~~~~~  
*his Disciples,* be generally understood  
to be applicable, in proportion, to *All*  
*Christians.* His *Prophetical Warnings*  
do all of them extend even unto the *End*  
*of the World :* And his *Directions to his*  
*immediate Followers* are usually couched  
under such Expressions, as were mani-  
festly intended for the Use and Instructi-  
on of all *intervening Ages,* until his co-  
ming to Judgment. *Where ever two or*  
*three* (says he) *are gathered together in*  
*my Name,* Matt. xviii, 20 ; *there am I*  
*in the midst of them.* Wheresoever and  
whenssoever the Doctrine of Christ is re-  
ceived, and practised according to his di-  
rections, in the love of Truth, Righteous-  
ness and Peace ; be it in *one Place,* in one  
*Age* of the world, or in *Another ;* be it by  
*Many* persons, or by *Few :* *There* is the  
*Church of Christ :* To *Them* belong all  
the *glorious Promises,* which he has ever  
made to his *Church ;* and to *Them* be-  
long all the *Warnings* which he has gi-  
ven, of *Persecutions* to be expected from  
an unrighteous and corrupt World. For  
This reason, whoever at any time asked  
him *When* the Kingdom should be resto-

Serm. red to *Israel*, or *When* the Kingdom of  
 XVII. God should come; and *When* shall all  
 ~~~~~ these things come to pass; and *What* shall  
 be the Sign of thy Coming, and of the
 End of the World? instead of mentioning
 any *particular time*, he constantly warn'd
 them to watch and to be ready at *all times*.
 And at the Conclusion of the Prophecy,
 whereof my Text is a part; he in express
 words declares, (as 'tis recorded by St
Mark, ch. xiii, 37,) *What I say unto You,*
I say unto ALL, Watch. And at ano-
 ther time, when his Disciples directly
 asked him, whether he intended his Dis-
 course in particular to *Them*, or in general
 to *All* men, *Luke xii, 41;* his Answer
 is to the very same Purpose. He had been
 exhorting them, *ver. 35;* *Let your loyns*
be girded about, and your Lights burn-
ing; And ye yourselves like unto men
that wait for their Lord.—*Blessed*
are those Servants, whom the Lord,
when he cometh, shall find watching.—
And this know, that if the good man of
the house had known what hour the Thief
would come, he would have watched, and
not have suffered his house to be broken
through. Be YE therefore ready also;
for the Son of man cometh at an hour
when ye think not. Then Peter said un-
 to

to him, Lord, speakest thou this Parable unto Us, or even to All? And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise Steward, whom his Lord shall make Ruler over his Household, to give them their portion of Meat in due Season? Blessed is That Servant, whosoever he be, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. Serm. XVII.

2dly. A Second Observation arising from what our Lord declares in the Text, is; that the Salvation of Men does not depend upon Any Differences of *External* Circumstances in the present Life, but intirely upon the *Inward* Qualifications of their Minds, and upon their Behaviour under the Circumstances wherein the Providence of God has placed them, *whatsoever* those Circumstances be. I tell you, says he, in *That Night* there shall be two men in One Bed; the One shall be taken, and the Other left. And when the Disciples asked him, *Where, Lord?* he answers in the Text, under a known *Proverbial* Expression; *Wherever the Case is alike, the Event will be the Same: Wheresoever the Body is, thither will the Eagles be gathered together.* Not only to those who shall be living at

Serm. the Time and Place of our Lord's coming
 XVII. to Judgment, but to All Others likewise,
 ~~~~~ at all Times and in all Places, shall This  
 declaration of His be verified: *Two men*  
*shall be in One Bed; the One shall be ta-*  
*ken, and the Other left:* By no visible or  
*appearing* differences of worldly Circum-  
 stances, but merely according to their in-  
 ward moral Qualifications, shall men fi-  
 nally be distinguished. Not to Those in  
*particular*, who shall be found alive at  
 our Lord's Second Coming, does he say,  
*Blessed is That Servant whom his Lord,*  
*when he cometh, shall find so doing:*  
 But his Meaning is, to *All in general*, in  
 all Times and Places; *Blessed is That Ser-*  
*vant whom his Lord, when he cometh,*  
*shall find to have so done.* Thus when  
 the Prophet *Daniel* says, *ch. xii, 12,*  
*Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh*  
*to* — the time of the End: The Mean-  
 ing is not, *Blessed is he* that shall happen  
 to *live* at the time of the end; but, *Blef-*  
*sed is he* who by *Waiting*, that is, by  
 Rom. ii, 7. *patient continuance in Well-doing*, by  
 being constantly upon his Guard against  
 the Temptations of an unrighteous and  
 corrupt World, by *Keeping Himself* (as  
 1 Joh. v, 18. St *John* expresses it) so that *That Wick-*  
*ed One toucheth him not;* blessed is He  
 who

who by thus *Waiting*, shall be found *worthy to attain That life* which shall be revealed at the *End of the days*, and to *stand before the Son of Man*. Many are very apt to imagine, if they had lived in some *Other Place* or *Age* of the World, if they had been placed under some *Other Circumstances* than they *Are*, if they had lived in *Our Saviour's days* and at a time when *one rose from the dead*; the Principles of religion would have had a very different Effect upon them, from what they *Now* have. But all This, is a very great Fallacy: And Experience has shown, that not upon Differences of *Time* and *Place*, but upon the *Moral Disposition* of men's *Hearts and Minds*, does the *Influence of religion* entirely depend. The *Jews in the Wilderness* were not at all reformed, even by the *Sight* of numerous *Miracles*. And the Pharisees in *our Saviour's time*, who said, *If we had been in the days of our Fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the Blood of the Prophets*; did yet, by their *Deeds*, shew themselves to be the *Genuine Sons*, and *Inheritours of the Temper*, of those who killed the Prophets.

3dly,



Serm.

XVII.

3dly and Lastly. The *Last* Observation I shall draw from this Discourse of our Saviour, of which my Text is the Conclusion; is, that all the *Marks* or *Notes*, which Those of the Church of *Rome* pretend to give us, of the *True Church* of God; are such as our Lord here warns his Disciples not to be deceived by. *Christ*, they tell us, is no where to be found but among *Them*: And the Doctrines and Benefits of the Gospel, can no other way possibly be conveyed to Mankind, than through the particular *Channel* of *Rome*. What is This, but the very thing our Lord here admonishes us to beware of? *If any man shall say unto you, Lo, Here is Christ, or There; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false Prophets.—— Wherefore, if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the Desert; go not forth: Behold, he is in the secret Chambers; believe it not. For as, where-ever the Body is, thither will the Eagles be gathered together; And as, where ever the Lightning is, there will the Shining of it be the Same, from the one part under Heaven, even unto the Other: So*

*also*

Matt.

xxiv; 23--

-----28.

Luke xvii;

24, 37.

also is the Light of the everlasting Gospel, Serm.  
and of the Scripture of Truth. XVII.

Thus again: Pretended *Miracles*, in order to establish their *New Doctrines*, and introduce *New Practises*; What are these, but accomplishments of That prediction of our Lord; *There shall arise False Christs and False Prophets, and shall show great Signs and Wonders, insomuch that (if it were possible) they shall deceive the very Elect!* Matt. xxiv, 24.

Again: *Visibility*, or *Worldly Pomp*, *Grandeur* and *Authority*, which they make to be Another *Note* or *Mark* of the *True Church* of God; is directly the *Reverse* of what our Saviour declared to *His Disciples*. *They shall deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for my Name's Sake. And, because iniquity shall abound, the Love of many shall wax cold. And, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find Faith on the Earth?* ver. 9, 12. Luke xviii, 8.

*Marks* therefore or *Notes* of the *True Church* of Christ, in the nature of things, there *can* be *None*, but *That One* essential

Serm. tial one, which *makes* it to be the True  
 XVII. Church; *viz.* the *Profession and Pract-*  
 ~~~~~ *ise of the Truth*; the *Profession and*  
Practise of That Doctrine, which our
Lord himself taught, and which his *A-*
postles preached and delivered down in
Writing to all succeeding generations.
With This; where ever *Two or Three*
 Matt. *are gathered together in the name of*
 xviii, 20. *Christ, There is Christ in the midst of*
them; that is to say, *There is the true*
Church of God. Without This; how
Many, and how *Great Nations* soever,
conspire together; how numerous soever
 Exod. *the Multitudes* be, which *follow* each o-
 xxiii, 2. *ther to do Evil*; 'tis still *only a Sect* or
Schism, 'tis but a *Heresy* or *Worldly*
Faction.

F I N I S.



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